EIGHT-PAGE DETACHABLE SUPPLEMENT

RICHARD DIMBLEBY and PERCY THROWER introduce the

EASTER GUIDE FOR WEEKEND GARDENERS

Week ending March 24 1956 *Every Wednesday Fourpence*

JOHN BULL

Begins inside: 'BEYOND THE BLACK STUMP'
The great new novel by
NEVIL SHUTE
This Is My Life
by EAMONN ANDREWS

How you feel today

depends on how you slept last night!

HOW DID YOU SLEEP LAST NIGHT?

Whether you work as a model, policewoman or shorthand typist — nothing runs you down quicker than insufficient sleep. To begin with you feel tired and depressed. And because you *are* tired — your whole system is thrown out of gear. The metabolic process which recharges your body with nervous energy slows down. You start worrying. Or lie in bed with your thoughts racing round and round . . . too tired to sleep! There's only one way to break this vicious circle. Both your body and mind must learn to relax. *And the best way to relax last thing at night is — drink a comforting cup of Milo.*

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Milo is the famous food drink made by Nestlé's. It's good — very good for relaxing people whose 'nerves' won't let them rest. Drink a cup of delicous chocolate-flavoured Milo tonight. The first thing you'll notice is a definite sense of increased well-being. That's Milo's concentrated goodness digesting easily into soothing nourishment. Now . . . relax. Let yourself succumb to delightful drowsiness as Milo's comforting warmth gently nudges you into sleep.

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MILO means GOODNIGHT!

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Each ounce of MILO contains a minimum of 0.45 milligrams of Vitamin B_1, and 320 I.U.s of Vitamin D, together with 125 milligrams each of Calcium and Phosphorus.

DMS

JOHN BULL

189 HIGH HOLBORN LONDON W.C.1

TEMPLE BAR 2468 MARCH 24 1956 VOLUME 99 NUMBER 2595

IN THIS ISSUE

Stories

NO STEAM FOR MISS PAGET *by Clive Burnley* 20
THE PRIVATE WAR *by Edmund Cooper* 24

Articles

WATCHDOGS ON THE TRAWLERS' BEAT *by Don Everitt* 19
SAILORS ON WHEELS *by Jack Atack* 36
KING IDRIS RULES A PAPER KINGDOM *by Harry Hopkins* 22

Serials

BEYOND THE BLACK STUMP (Part 1) *by Nevil Shute* 11
THIS IS *MY* LIFE (Part 2) *by Eamonn Andrews* 16

Supplement

GUIDE FOR WEEKEND GARDENERS
introduced by Percy Thrower and Richard Dimbleby 25–32

Features

FREE SPEECH: 4, 6, 8. THE COVER: 8. COURTESY: 38, 41, 42, 43, 53, 54. OPEN TO VIEW: 40. SPOT THE LAWBREAKER: 43.

REPORT FROM THE EDITOR

In Australia, Nevil Shute writes for five hours a day

NEVIL SHUTE is very familiar with the sun-parched world of his latest novel, *Beyond The Black Stump*, which begins on page 11; Australia has been his home for six years. He was born in Ealing in 1899, but "life in London has never attracted me much. . . . Life is more satisfying when one is a big frog in a little puddle." His own small world is a hundred-acre farm with cattle and pigs, and a house he built for his wife and two daughters. During the seven or eight months it takes him to write a novel (JOHN BULL has serialized four of them), he works for five hours a day. "Then I go round the farm telling them what to do, and perhaps drive the tractor for a bit."

A mathematician by inclination and an aeronautical engineer by training, Shute began writing for relaxation, finding that spare-time fiction helped to bring him fresh to the drawing board. His first novel, *Marazan*, earned him about £30 when it was published in 1926. But success has its own bonuses; four years ago the book was reprinted in a cheap edition and brought him £432 in six months.

PERCY THROWER, who with Richard Dimbleby introduces our Gardening Supplement in this week's issue, was the man chosen in 1951 to plan the "typically English garden" to be built in Berlin as a token of friendship. When he was showing the Queen a model of the garden she said in surprise: "Why, I know you! Surely you used to be at Windsor."

He had been—as a journeyman gardener before the war. "We grew everything there," he says, "but prided ourselves on producing fruit out of season. Every day when the Court was in London a pantechnicon was loaded with fruit, vegetables and rare flowers and sent to Buckingham Palace. We even grew bananas, which taste better if they mature on trees in Britain, and always had grapes and peaches ready for Queen Mary's birthday in May."

One of his most pleasant Windsor memories is of the Queen, as a little girl, picking a daffodil from the masses that bloomed under the trees and running to put it in her grandfather's buttonhole.

Thrower has another good reason for remembering Windsor: he married the head gardener's daughter. Now, as parks superintendent, he lives with his wife and three daughters at the gates of The Quarry Park in Shrewsbury. He broadcasts regularly and has been conducting TV gardening programmes for four years.

Too late for the truth to mend her romance

JILL could remember so clearly the day Paul gave her his photograph —rather shyly and only because she had so often asked for one.

That was three months ago, when they were spending all the time they could together. Wonderfully happy times, which grew steadily fewer and fewer until . . . Jill had to face the truth. Paul was no longer in love with her.

She would never be able to ask him why. And he would always be too shy to tell her the simple truth—that her unpleasant breath was more than he could bear.

FACTS OF THE MATTER

Jill should have asked *herself* why she started every day with a stale, rough taste in her mouth: the "morning mouth" that means bad breath! It's so simple.

While we sleep, tiny food particles decay in the crevices of teeth and gums, and give off a pungent odour. This bad breath odour can last *right through to the evening* if it is not dealt with properly.

Mentasol Toothpaste solves this problem. Mentasol contains odour-killing chlorophyll. It reaches remote danger spots, such as gum flaps and tooth crevices, and counteracts the organic putrefaction that leads to mouth odour. Within seconds, bad breath is stopped, and stopped for hours.

Brush your teeth regularly with Mentasol Chlorophyll Toothpaste. It will help to keep your whole mouth fresh, clean and healthy.

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THE CHLOROPHYLL TOOTHPASTE

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GIVE 'EM CLEAN SOIL

says Bob Green, our gardening expert

1. D'you know what causes most o' your plant and seedling losses? Fungus disease in the soil.

2. So do make a clean start this year—sterilize the soil *as you dig*. Too late once plants are in!

3. Saturate the bottom of each trench with a solution of Jeyes' — ONE tablespoonful per gallon of water.

4. As you throw in topsoil, soak that too with the same strength solution. Use plenty—it's cheap enough!

5. Leave the plot for at least a fortnight, then rake over and sow or plant. Clean soil pays handsomely later.

6. Sterilize potting soil too, and disinfect pots and boxes with Jeyes' to prevent re-infection.

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Free Speech

- **Will motorists be a prey for profiteers?**
- **More mercy flights for helicopters**
- **Britain's homes wear a gayer garb**

WHEN I was in New Jersey, U.S.A., I experienced motor testing stations as proposed in Britain, and I was not in the least impressed.

They were surrounded by private garages which obligingly primed cars to an absurd pitch for the test, and restored them to a driveable condition immediately afterwards. Brakes, for example, were tightened until the car could hardly move.

Motorists are already familiar with the garage that fits a new part, such as an air-cleaner, to order, and then plays on the customer's technical ignorance by pointing out half a dozen other "urgent" replacements. It looks as if non-technical motorists will be sitting prey for get-rich-quick garages once these tests are introduced.—L. P., King's Lynn, Norfolk.

Faith Moves . . .

Moving homes or other buildings in Canada is a simple affair. My photograph shows a large church, with a seating capacity of three hundred and weighing more than twenty tons,

which was moved fifty miles by road last spring.

The building was bought for a modest sum, and provided a congregation in an expanding community with a church at less than half the cost of a new building.—J. SHORE, Transcona, Manitoba, Canada.

Rescue By Air

A national service of rescue helicopters ("Scooped to Safety," JOHN BULL, February 18) could be an adjunct to, and perhaps eventually supersede, the lifeboat service.

They seem to be able to reach wrecks more quickly and in all kinds of weather. At the moment, a lifeboat can carry more survivors, but much larger helicopters are being designed than those now used.—A. S. FLOYD, Warminster, Wiltshire.

"Because of weather conditions, helicopters will not entirely replace lifeboats in the foreseeable future," says the Royal National Lifeboat Institution. "But helicopters are being used more and more in rescue work. Last year, helicopters co-operated with us fifty-eight times compared with only twelve in 1954, which was our busiest year since the war."

Dog-eared

Browsing in a library, I came across a book whose pages were stuck together with what seemed to be chewing gum. The librarian said that children's books were sometimes returned with half-eaten lollipops or pieces of bread and jam inside.

I have heard of books going back containing bank notes—even fivers.—W. R. SMITH, London, W.10.

"Queer things are put in books," says a librarian, "including troublesome marginal notes and comments written in by readers. But damage is chiefly caused by domestic pets. A dog will often get jealous of a book, because it diverts his master's attention from him; and when the book is put down the dog will savage it."

Brighter Britain

On a recent holiday at St. Albans, Hertfordshire, I found old houses, as well as new ones, with bright paintwork. This was true, too, of houses at Hatfield.

Two weeks before the outbreak of the first World War, I went to Brussels, and on the journey from Ostend I was much impressed by the bright colours in which the houses were painted. There were sunshine yellows, wonderful bright blues, greens and reds of varying shades — all so different from our own drab colours.

Britain seems to have been a long time catching up with the Continental countries. — W. R. C., Dunoon, Argyll.

The Central Housing Advisory Committee recommended in 1948 that council houses should have a fresh and attractive appearance, avoiding "drab colours and graining of all kinds."

Many councils have acted on the committee's suggestions. "Local authorities have become very colour conscious in the last few years," says the Housing Ministry.

Road Rights

Twice a week, a friend of mine drives between Bournemouth and Salisbury. One evening, while rounding a bend, he ran into a cow and killed it. The car suffered £50 worth of damage.

I should say that the owners of the cow were in the wrong, but the insurance company has had to pay up, because an ancient law states that animals have either priority or equal rights on the road.

If so, it is time the law was brought up to date. Wandering animals were all right before the motor car, but certainly not now.—H. C., Poole, Dorset.

"Animals were allowed on the highway, even before cars were invented, and there has been no law to change this," says a lawyer. "A motorist can recover damages only where it can be shown that an accident was due to negligence by the animal's owner."

Rough Justice

I went into a butcher's shop to buy a piece of boiling bacon marked "5s. 6d. (approx.) to be reweighed." When the manager reweighed it, he said the price was 6s. 6d. I suggested that it was a rather far-fetched approximation on the ticket; he replied that it was obviously the wrong ticket, or perhaps five had been written for six in error.

I always understood that wrongly priced articles had to be sold at the price shown.—V. LAW, Belmont Road, Gillingham, Kent.

"The price on a ticket is merely an offer by the seller, and a contract of

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

Meet Mr Brandyman

He's worth cultivating. Always ready to fit his mood to yours. In the company of ginger ale or soda he offers you the choice of two stimulating and refreshing long drinks.

Make friends with

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BRANDY

See what doctors say about 'KEYSTONE'

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"I like your wine very much and am very frequently ordering it for those of my patients who need a pick-me-up especially after convalescence."

An over-worked bank manager was advised by his doctor to take Keystone for his run-down condition, to his great benefit.

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5/9 a half flagon
6d. deposit, returnable, on both sizes

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Free Speech

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

sale is only made when the customer offers to buy the goods at the price and the seller agrees to sell at that price," says a lawyer. "Unless there is a contract of sale, there is nothing binding on either side."

Selfish Celts

I have come to the conclusion that Scotsmen are selfish. When I recently spent a holiday at the home of one, I noticed that everything revolved round the man of the house. He had the warm seat by the fire, and at meal times he was served first. His family obviously thought it natural to wait on him hand and foot.

My Scots friends showed surprise at my considering this out of the ordinary.—MOLLY NICHOLSON, London, S.W.6.

Profit From Loss

The case of the young man who travelled across London to return money he had found ("Free Speech," February 25) supported my belief that there are more honest people about than one might suppose.

As a department store manager, I know that my staff never fail to hand in any lost money they find in the shop. It is always passed to the police, but invariably, at the end of three months, it becomes the property of the finder—presumably because the owner lacks sufficient faith in the honesty of the ordinary citizen to think it worth while making any inquiries.—E. D. B., Bedford.

London Transport says: "Last year, our Lost Property Office received 457,198 articles. Of these, 156,302 —thirty-four per cent—were restored to their owners. The proportion of those claiming their property is about the same year after year."

Ancient Lights

While trying to mend a fuse in a house plunged into darkness, it struck me that our domestic electrical systems are rather out of date.

Why aren't fuses supplied like the screw-in type used in Germany? These have inserts which turn black when a fuse occurs, and would save a lot of time and trouble.—F. M. WIGHTMAN, Saltcoats, Ayrshire.

"The cartridge fuse system is widely used in Britain for heavy power circuits in industry," says an electrical engineer. "The cartridge, which replaces fuse wire, displays a spot which changes colour when a fuse blows. There is a domestic version, but people will not usually go to the expense of a new system.

"Quite a lot of new houses are being wired on the ring circuit system, which provides for an individual cartridge fuse in each appliance plug."

Geared To Value

Although a motorist might, at the time of buying a car, insure it for full value for comprehensive cover, an insurance company will only make settlement for current market value.

In view of rapid depreciation in value and the increased cost of insurance this year for postwar cars, it is advisable to inquire from the insurance company at renewal for the current market value, and ask for a revised premium. This may save a pound or two.—A. CLAYDEN, Springfield Nursery, Bekesbourne, Kent.

"Immediately a new car is put on the road it loses some of its value," says an insurance company. "When making renewal, motorists should ask for, and insure at, the current market value, which is interpreted very generously by most reputable companies."

Pet Aversion

The tiger cubs in "Ginger" (JOHN BULL, February 18) reminded me of the panther cub brought home by one of my father's sepoys when I lived in India. We domesticated it, but it became very rough as it grew older, frightening the servants and even our big Benjara dog. It would try to sharpen its claws on the rugs and furniture, and rip the curtains while scrambling up them.

My father would say jokingly that the panther was better than a watch-dog, and would not hear of parting with it. But one day he came home and found the green baize on his writing desk scratched to ribbons, and government letters chewed to pulp. That sealed the panther's fate, for my father immediately arranged for it to be accepted by Nagpur Zoo.—MRS. M. LENIHAN, Highburgh Road, Hillhead, Glasgow, W.2.

Years Of Sleep

An American girl has been in a deep sleep for sixteen years. Can a person live indefinitely asleep without food?—J. MACGREGOR, Nairn, Morayshire.

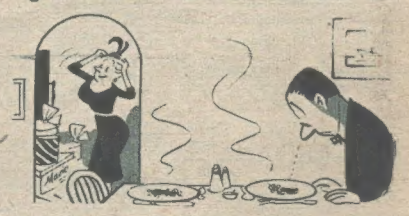
"People must have food to live," says a doctor. "It is given to an unconscious patient in liquid form through a tube into the stomach, or by injection into a vein."

There have been many cases of unconsciousness over long periods. In 1954, a Henley-on-Thames man died after a coma lasting 174 days, and doctors say that a ten-year-old Canadian boy, unconscious for six months, may have to remain so for the remaining fifty or sixty years of his life. In 1944, an Indian went into a stupor from which he recovered after seven years.

Supply And Demand

The fact that mothers go out to work should not be blamed on the "emancipation" of women ("Free Speech," February 25).

If women were allowed a reasonable amount of their husband's wage for their own personal allowance, as their right, there would be no need for



many to work outside their homes to achieve a little independence.

Any money a wife saves from the housekeeping belongs to her husband. She is not legally entitled to a penny for herself.—G. BODINGTON, Dartford, Kent.

"It is up to the woman to see that she gets a reasonable allowance from her husband," says a lawyer. "If a husband gives his wife a certain sum as an allowance, out of which she undertakes to pay the housekeeping, then she can keep any balance for herself. But if the money is given to her specifically for housekeeping, she must account to her husband for any surplus."

Royal Godchild

A friend of mine who married a Belgian after the war is expecting another child—her seventh. She already has six girls and is now, naturally, hoping for a son.

Her husband, who has no preference, tells me that if the child is a girl, she will be adopted by their Queen.—MRS. D. PERCH, The Ridgeway, Waddon, Surrey.

In Belgium, the King becomes godfather to any seventh consecutive son, and the Queen—in this case, Queen

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

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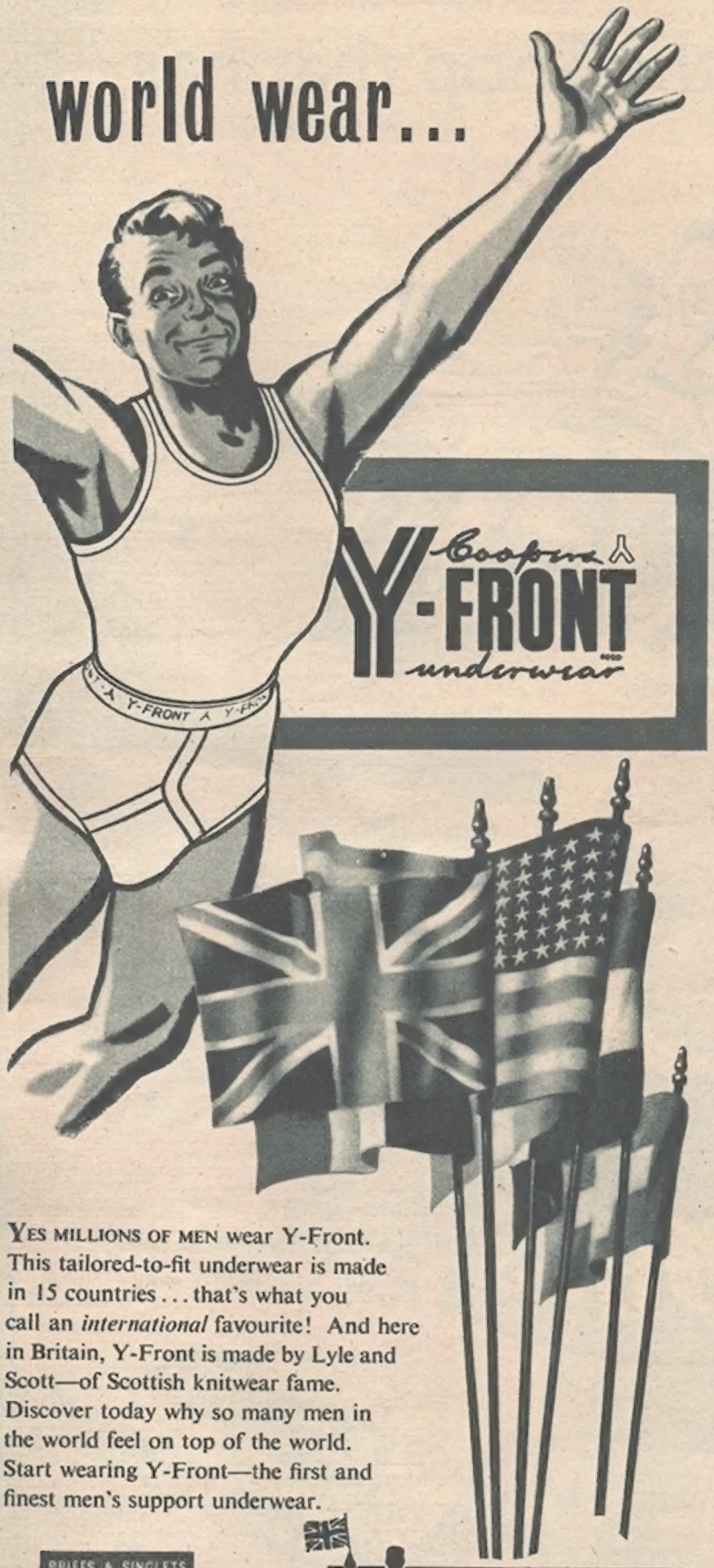

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Free Speech

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

Elizabeth of the Belgians, the King's grandmother—becomes godmother to any seventh consecutive daughter. Children qualifying receive a royal gift on each birthday, with a special one to mark the twenty-first.

Blind Spot

Although a local butcher has installed a wash basin at the back of his shop in the interests of hygiene, meat pies continue to be piled on the counter near the door, unprotected from the dust of the street and from the coughs and sneezes of customers.—MRS. D. WEST, Northampton.

Hygiene regulations which came into force on January 1 say that food must not be placed so as to invite any risk of contamination. A complaint could be lodged with the local medical officer of health, but only a court could decide whether or not the pies were open to contamination.

Odd Man Out

About three months ago, we had a sow with only one piglet in its litter.

For several reasons, we had to take the piglet away from its mother, and we then fed it from a bottle. The piglet was given the run of the house

and garden, and sleeps on the hearth-rug between our two dogs. The three are inseparable friends. My photograph shows one of the dogs and his small companion.

Now, if I go for walks, or even go shooting, I am joined by the two dogs and the piglet.—S. DUNHAM, Bedales, Petersfield, Hampshire.

Left Unmoved

While in Trieste some years ago, my wife and I went to a local circus. We had ringside seats.

During the elephant show, the fourth elephant picked up the empty chair next to my wife as he trundled by, and threw it twenty or thirty yards into the air. "It's part of the act," I whispered.

By this time a couple of circus hands had vanished through the roof of the tent. We sat on in wonder, while the loudspeakers blared out in Italian.

Then I felt a tap on my shoulder. "Are you English?" said a voice. "Yes," I said. "The management want to thank you both for averting a panic," came the reply. "We've been trying to empty the tent for the last ten minutes. One of the elephants has gone mad."—K. RENTON, Napier Close, Crowthorne, Berkshire.

Double Duty

Most bank cheques must have a two-penny stamp on them, but a cheque received from Guernsey, which already bears a twopenny stamp, must have another one added to it by the recipient to make it legal.—H. HAWKINS, Buttery Road, Smethwick, Staffordshire.

"When documents drawn abroad come here to be used, they have to be considered for English stamp duty," says the Inland Revenue. "For this purpose, the Channel Islands—and the Isle of Man—are regarded as being outside the United Kingdom. Besides its own duty stamp, a Channel Islands cheque must therefore bear a U.K. stamp if it is to be negotiated here."

Early Find

On February 17, I became the possessor of my first 1956 coin—a shilling. As far as I can remember, this is the earliest in any year that I have seen a coin of that year's mintage.

I wonder if this is luck, or whether this year's coins are being released earlier.—G. LEVITT, Sedgefield Crescent, Romford, Essex.

"It is impossible to say when this year's shillings were released, but the exceptionally cold winter no doubt stepped up the demand for them by people with gas meters," says a Royal Mint official. "We always start minting new coins on the first day of the year they bear. When they reach the public depends on stocks of old coins we or the banks may have—for these would be released first."

Answer To Apathy

In a few weeks' time, there will be the usual trickle of voters to the local elections. Most districts count themselves lucky if half the electorate vote, but general elections stir the imagination far more and can generally rely on the vote of the vast majority of the people.

I suggest that local elections in their present form could be safely abandoned. It would be much cheaper and certainly as democratic if local authority areas were reorganized to coincide with parliamentary divisions. Councillors could then be elected at the same time as M.P.s, and on the same ballot papers.

Party representation on councils could be in proportion to the number of votes each party receives.—L. B. C., Eastbourne, Sussex.

John Bull pays one guinea for each letter published in "Free Speech," and at the usual rates for photographs. Readers with problems (other than medical) should write to the John Bull Free Advice Service, whose experts answer questions by post

THE COVER

THE hopeful hints on the seed packet don't cover this situation and, come to think of it, neither does this week's Supplement. Neighbours join the legion of gardener's enemies when he's in this mood. Admittedly, it's taken a month of wifely prodding to get Morden's cover husband as far as the tool shed, but now he has a spade in his hand and, as ever, it's proved to be the key to summer's most satisfying pursuit. Let's hope that the visitors don't offer too much expert advice; that's the most annoying garden pest of all.

Good wholesome **BEER**

The best long drink in the world!

THE OXFORD FAN and the Cambridge man are both agreed on this — when a wet bob's feeling dry he should set a course for The Local and treat his thirst to a beer. Cheering, invigorating beer.

There's nothing in the whole wide world so refreshing as a man-size pint of bitter . . . or mild . . . or mild and bitter. Or a glass of light ale . . . or a 'brown' . . . or a stout. What's yours?

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An outstanding new novel of life in the wilds of Australia . . . by NEVIL SHUTE

Beyond The Black Stump

STANTON LAIRD sat in an office of the Topeka Exploration Company Inc., on the eighteenth floor of the Topex Building in Cedar Street in New York City, and explained his work again to Mr. Sam Johnson.

He had explained this previously to Mr. Johnson in a fairly lengthy report that he had typed with sweating, gritty hands in the hut beside the oil rig where he had lived with the drilling crew, and he had known as he typed that Mr. Johnson would either be too busy to read it at all or would merely study the conclusions.

Mr. Johnson didn't say much while the young man talked. In dealing with the young technicians who worked under his control he had developed a technique of making them do the talking.

Presently he glanced at the clock. "I guess we'll go and get some lunch," he said. "Which hotel are you staying at?"

"I've got a friend who has an apartment in Peter Cooper Village," the young man said. "I'll call him later on, see if he's got a bed."

"Didn't you get in yesterday?"

Stanton shook his head. "We got a twenty hours' delay at Lisbon. They had to change a motor on the plane."

Mr. Johnson glanced again at his technician. He had always been a pale young

"It's kind of easy to go off on the wrong trail in this country," the American said to Molly Regan

man, with short, mousy hair and little colour in his face. Three years in Arabia had bronzed him to a deep yellow rather than a brown; he seemed more adult and self-reliant than when he had last sat in that office, but he did not look very well. Perhaps that was fatigue.

"What time did you get in?"

"I'd say we landed around eight o'clock," the young man replied.

"Get any sleep on the way over?"

"Not very much."

MR. JOHNSON pressed a switch on the side of his desk, and said: "Sharon, call the club and tell them I'll be bringing a guest in for lunch. Table for two. I'll be right over." He heaved his massive body up from the desk. "Let's go and get some lunch. How much leave had you got coming? Ten weeks?"

"Nine," said Stanton. "I took a week in Cairo last year."

"Maybe we'll give you that. Where are you going for it? Out West?"

Stanton nodded. "I'll go home and stay with my folks—for a while, anyway."

They left the office and walked to the elevator. "Oregon, isn't it?" said the older man. "Way in from Portland somewhere?"

"That's right," said the geologist. "Place called Hazel, in the back of the state."

"Is Hazel a big place?"

The young man shook his head. "About ten thousand at the last count, I think."

They walked in silence for a couple of blocks and went into another building and up in an elevator. They walked out into the air-conditioned coolness of the club and checked their hats, and then Mr. Johnson led his guest into the bar. "What's it to be?"

"Orange juice," said the young man.

Mr. Johnson ordered it, with rye on the rocks for himself. "Still sticking to your principles?"

"I guess so," said the geologist. "It's mighty easy to stick to some principles." He laughed. "I just don't like it."

In fact, he had an aversion to alcohol that was almost pathological. He felt about alcohol as other people might feel about cocaine, that it was most dangerous stuff to take even in the smallest quantities.

These feelings were connected, rather strangely, with his first driving licence; he had sowed his wild oats younger than most men.

His father, Stanton Laird, was a Presbyterian of remote Scots descent. In his youth he had founded the Hazel Cold Storage Corporation, and he had worked it up into a sizeable concern by 1938.

With the coming of war he had sold the cold storage business and had bought three ranches in the district, and he had profited over the war years from the demand for beef for the armies. As peace approached he looked ahead to the peacetime demand for automobiles, and in 1944 he bought a gas station in Hazel. In 1945 he sold his ranches and in 1946 he built a showroom and extensive modern workshops behind his gas station. Since then he had prospered more than ever.

The change from cold storage to ranching had come when Junior was fourteen years old. The change meant that the family removed from the house in Franklin Avenue and went to live about fifteen miles from Hazel on a ranch.

A thoughtful provision of the State of Oregon decreed that in such circumstances a child could get a driving licence, theoretically limited to the route between his home and school. Accordingly Stanton Junior got his first motor-car driving licence at the age of fourteen. With the licence and the car he became free from all parental or any other control.

By the time he was sixteen he was leading a thoroughly dissipated life. There was little left for him to experiment with in the spheres of tobacco, alcohol, or girls.

The end of it all came when Stanton Junior was in the last term of his junior year. He had a friend called Chuck Sheraton who came to school in an old Plymouth tourer, a merry and inconsequent young man whose one ambition was to fly aeroplanes. Being friends, they made common property of many of their belongings, including their girls.

One evening in the early summer they were playing a complicated game based on "touch last" in their two cars around the streets of suburban Hazel, Diana Fawsitt driving with Chuck and Ruth Eberhart with Stanton.

It was a good game, but that evening they carried it a bit too far. Stanton, crossing Roosevelt Avenue at seventy miles an hour, hit the Plymouth broadside on and hurled it on its side on to the sidewalk. Diana was thrown out and killed almost instantaneously. Chuck got concussion and a fractured shoulder. Ruth got scars upon her face and arms that would last her lifetime, and Stanton got three fractured ribs.

An empty bottle of whisky was found in Stanton's car, the doctor pronounced both boys and Ruth to be under the influence of liquor, the post-mortem revealed Diana to have been pregnant, and further research revealed that Ruth was pregnant, too.

This happened a few months after Pearl Harbour, when the citizens of the United States had more important things to think about than the misdeeds of their teenagers. It seemed profitless to Judge Hadley to start anyone upon a road that might end at the penitentiary; he dealt with the case summarily in ten minutes when the boys came out of hospital and sentenced Chuck and Stanton to a year in the reform school, suspending the sentence indefinitely subject to satisfactory reports from the police. It only remained for the parents to clean up the mess.

When the Eberharts pressed Ruth to declare the father of her child she took two days to think about it in the hospital, and finally decided that Chuck Sheraton was more fun than Stanton.

Accordingly, when they came out of hospital Ruth and Chuck were married, rather quietly. The bridegroom was still at high school but Ruth's education was considered finished.

The weeks that followed were not happy ones for Stanton. That Ruth had thrown him over for Chuck was a bitter blow to him. He turned to work for an anodyne, his grief for Ruth tempered by a secret relief that it had proved impossible for him to get married at sixteen.

He worked very hard in his last year at high school. He had a good brain and it was his intention to go on to the University of Oregon. He stayed there for four years, a sober minded, hard-working, rather pale young man doing physics and geology, and he graduated with some distinction. From the university he had got a research job with the Carnegie Institution in Washington, D.C., and two years later he had joined the Topex team.

NOW, in the club bar, he raised the question of his next employment with his boss. "Will you want me to go back to Arabia after this vacation?" he inquired. "I'd like to know ahead if it's to be back there."

Mr. Johnson shook his head. "Not Arabia. Have you got any preference?"

"I could do with a domestic assignment for a time," Stanton suggested. "I've been out of the United States now for three years."

"Are you getting married?"

The geologist shook his head.

"We usually try to work married men into the domestic assignments," Mr. Johnson said. "It's fairer on the kids. Have you got any other preference?"

"I'd just as soon it was a white country," said Stanton. "I've seen enough of sand and Arabs to last me for a while."

Mr. Johnson finished his drink and led the way into the dining-room. He said: "What would you think of Paraguay?"

"Be a change from Arabia, anyway," said Stanton.

They said no more about the future work, but sat for a time in the club lounge after the meal, talking of other aspects of the Topex organization.

In the end Mr. Johnson said: "You're going out West tomorrow, I suppose?"

"Unless you want me here."

The older man shook his head.

"I'll talk to P. K. about the new assignment for you," he said, "but he's in Canada right now. I'll have to write you, maybe two weeks from now."

They walked back together to the office, where Stanton spent half an hour putting in expense accounts and drawing money. Then he walked out into the streets of New York and took a bus up Broadway.

In the late afternoon he found his way into Abercrombie and Fitch and spent a delightful hour looking over the new styles in fishing rods with reels incorporated with the handle, the new styles in outboard motors and fibreglass boats, in camping gear and sleeping bags. A stainless steel barbecue set with fork, spoon, and skewer three feet long, with steel hand shields gleaming and bright, took his fancy and he bought it as a present for his father.

Then he made his way happily through the thronging crowds around Grand Central Station

towards his friends in Peter Cooper Village. It was grand to be back in the United States again, but it would be even better to be back in Oregon again tomorrow, his own place.

All next day he flew westwards and landed at Seattle in the dusk. The fresh, salt-laden breeze from the Pacific was a tonic as he stepped out of the aeroplane.

He could not get home that night, but he could at least sleep in his own state. He took a Convair southwards from Seattle to Portland.

He got to the hotel at about ten o'clock, tired, but not too tired to ring his parents from the hotel bedroom. He spoke to his father and mother for some minutes and told them the time when he would land at Hazel airport; then he rang off and undressed slowly, savouring the comforts of the bedroom and the shower.

He flew next morning in an old D.C.3 eastwards from Portland up the Columbia River valley. The D.C.3 put down by the small Hazel airport building, and there at the fence he could see a little crowd of people waiting to meet him. He got out of the machine carrying his plastic overnight bag and the wrapped parcel that contained the barbecue set, and walked quickly to the barrier.

There were his mother and his father, clean-shaven and portly, and his sister Shelley with her husband Sam Rapke who ran his father's business, the biggest hardware store in Hazel, and two of their children, Lance, aged six and Avril, aged four; they must have left the baby at home. All the family was there to meet him, those who lived in Hazel, and he was glad of it.

"Hi-yah, Mom!" he said, and kissed her.

She said: "Junior, you're so *brown*!"

He turned from her to his father. "Hi-yah, Dad!"

His father said: "Welcome home, son! You're looking mighty well."

"I feel pretty good," Stanton said. "Glad to be back again."

He turned to greet his sister and the children and Sam Rapke, and when that was over he turned to his father again.

"Say, Dad, I got this for you when I stopped off in New York." He handed him the parcel. To his mother he said: "I got your present in one of the bags, Mom."

The barbecue set was unwrapped there and then as they stood by the airport barrier. His father said: "Say, that's just what we've been needing! We built an outdoor barbecue this spring."

"I know it, Dad. You wrote and told me."

His mother said: "Oh, Junior! They're so *elegant*!"

The few bags were taken from the aeroplane and wheeled into the baggage room, and they went in to claim them.

When he got home he found his room was exactly as he had left it three years previously, the same college banners on the wall, his fishing rods, his guns, his steel bow and arrows, his ski-ing boots, all carefully dusted and tended and exactly as he had left them. He was glad of it, and yet they made him feel that he had grown in stature during his travels; to some extent he had outgrown these things.

Downstairs the house was as he had known it from the time when they had bought it in his early manhood, and yet there were changes to be seen. The old electric range that had dominated the kitchen had been ripped out and a more modern one installed that dominated it more, a new dish-washer stood when the old one had stood, a larger, grander, and more elaborate refrigerator. . . .

Stanton Junior settled down to his ten weeks' leave happily enough, in his home town, in summer weather. Hazel lies in a bowl of the foothills of the Rocky Mountain range on the edge of the Hazel National Forest.

The National Forest is a tract of mountain country about fifty miles long and thirty miles wide, designated by the Federal Government as a Primitive Area. In a Primitive Area no house or road may be constructed and no internal-combustion engine may run; if you go into it

They were all there to meet him when he arrived at the airport. After three years, it was good to be home

ILLUSTRATED BY LAURENT

you go on horseback or on foot. In the high mountains the lakes are full of trout, and deer roam the mountain slopes.

Few of the active citizens of Hazel did not fish the rivers and the lakes, many of them kept horses and pack horses for adventures in the wilderness that lay above town. After the deserts of Arabia his home town was like a drink of clear, cool water to the geologist.

He fished a good deal in the Hazel River, mostly with a spinner, and he made a few short trips into the mountains on horseback, staying out each time for a couple of nights and sleeping in a sleeping-bag under the stars.

But fishing and riding did not occupy him fully, and for the first time in his life he began to take an interest in his father's business.

Laird Motors Inc. had developed a large tractor business and the adaptation of the tractors to various uses in the lumber industry had caused them to set up a considerable workshop for the manufacture of special parts and tools. These minor engineering creations became of real interest to him in the weeks he was at home, and whenever he had nothing else to do he would find his own way down to the shop and sit about watching the lathes and milling machines paring down the steel, and chatting to the men.

It was the middle of August before the letter from Mr. Johnson arrived. He found it waiting for him when he returned after a day's fishing. He stood in his fishing clothes, reading it in silence.

His mother asked: "Do they say where you're going?"

"Kind of difficult, Mom," he said thoughtfully. "They've given me a choice—Paraguay or Australia. I'll have to think it over."

Disappointed, his mother said: "There wouldn't be a chance of a job here in the United States?"

He had explained this to her before. "Not unless I get myself married, Mom."

She said nothing, and he went slowly to his room to park his fishing gear, unreel his line to dry, and change his clothes.

He took a couple of days to think it over before answering the letter. Like most young men in Hazel, he was accustomed at home to doing his own laundry; ironing a couple of shirts one morning in the kitchen while his mother prepared lunch, he said: "I just about made up my mind, Mom. I think I'll go to Australia."

She said: "Will it always have to be places such a long way away, son?"

"Depends how I get on," he said. "Maybe the head office one day, if I'm good enough."

"That would be in New York?"

"Uh-huh."

"Do you want a city life, even if it means a lot of money?"

"I don't know, Mom," he said slowly. "I wouldn't like living in New York."

"A small town's the best for small town people," she said quietly. "Your father and I, we've been mighty happy here."

He smiled.

"Go easy, Mom—all small towns aren't like Hazel. This is one of the best towns in the whole of the United States. Why, people come here from the East for their vacations!"

"I was just saying it's a mighty good place to live, son."

There was a long pause while he ran the iron carefully around a collar. "There'd be nothing I could do in a town like this," he said. "I don't know that there's any place I'd rather live in, but you got to be practical." He grinned. "There's not an oil rig in five hundred miles."

His mother said nothing, and the conversation lapsed.

He wrote next day to Mr. Johnson accepting the Australian assignment and asking if they wanted him to report back to New York on the conclusion of his leave, since in Oregon he was three thousand miles or so towards Australia. He did not get an answer for a week, and then he got a fat letter with many papers enclosed giving him preliminary information of the Topex business in Australia, a general account of the geological situation in the Hamersley Range, a detailed geological report of the probable formations under a place called Laragh deduced from surface indications, and a map.

The covering letter instructed him to report in San Francisco on September 20 to the Topex agent, who would supply him with expense money and any final instructions, and who was securing airline reservations for him.

He would make his way directly to Perth in West Australia and report to the local Topex manager, Mr. Colin Spriggs, who had an office in Barrack Street.

Three weeks before the end of Stanton's leave, Chuck Sheraton arrived from Texas, his Chev full to the brim with wife, four children, two dogs, a push-cart, luggage, camp kit, and appurtenances. The Sheraton home was in Lindbergh Avenue, two blocks from the Laird home on 2nd Street, and Stanton strolled round to visit with them the morning after they arrived.

As he approached the house a boy of eleven came out of the basement garage sucking a Coke through a straw, and Stanton got his shock.

"He doesn't want people to know his real name," Molly told David Cope

"American!" said Pat Regan scornfully. He

When he had last seen him four years previously this kid had been getting most uncomfortably like himself, and quite unlike his father or his mother. Now, at eleven, he was the very spit and image of Stanton at that age.

The geologist said: "Hi-yah, Tony! You remember me?"

The boy said: "You're Stan Laird."

"That's right. Have a good ride up?"

"Gloria was sick, and Imogen was sick, and Peter was sick. *I* wasn't sick."

The geologist wrinkled his brows, a little dazed. "Is Imogen the baby, or is that Peter?"

The child said scornfully: "They're dogs."

"Oh, sure! Your dad inside?"

"I guess so."

He found Ruth and Chuck in the house. He had not seen Ruth for four years and probably he had not met her half a dozen times since their disgrace; he thought he had got over that, and he was surprised that she could still give his heart a little twist when she said: "Why, Stan! It's real nice to see you."

Chuck was in a clean drill summer uniform shirt and slacks, sorting out a tangled mass of

flared suddenly into a fury. "Go and write the letter," he said, pointing at the man they called the Judge. "I'll not have Americans here!"

baggage and kit on the floor of the television alcove off the living-room. He said: "Hi-yah, fellow. How you doing?'

"Okay," said Stan. "You still in one piece?"

Chuck stood up, grinning, a bulging haversack in his hand. "More'n one piece. Either one or two more since I saw you—I kinda lose track of them. You better ask Ruthie. She might know."

"It's one more, Stan," she said. "Gloria was born just before you went away, remember?"

"Uh-huh. This the one born last fall?"

"That's right—Jasmine. She's asleep right now, but she's a lovely baby."

Chuck said: "Sure she's a lovely baby. Ruthie, what about a rum'n Coke?"

She went to get the bottles of Coca Cola from the refrigerator, and Chuck produced a half empty bottle of rum from the haversack. Stanton said: "Not for me, pal. I don't use the stuff."

"Not even in Arabia?" Chuck grinned.

Stanton shook his head. "No. Just Coke," he said.

They sat down, sucking Cokes and rum and Cokes through straws as they compared experiences. Chuck had achieved the Distinguished Flying Cross in Korea after shooting down three MiGs, and in celebration at a party in Tokyo he had crashed an army jeep, had been arrested by the military police, and had spent a night in the cooler.

He was now instructing fighter pilots at an air base near Houston, and he had developed a technique which was giving him a good deal of pleasure. In that district the railways were mostly single track. When night flying, he would cruise around until he saw a train, the engine decorated with one bright headlight. He would then retire fifteen miles ahead of it and bring his aircraft down to track level, flying towards the train with one landing light on, exactly above the track. So far no driver had actually died of fright but he understood that several had come very near it, and that half the locomotives in Texas were progressing in a series of leaps.

Stanton told them all about Arabia, or what he knew of it; it took him about three minutes. They then turned to gossip about their schoolmates in Hazel. They sat together gossiping for half an hour. Then Ruth left them.

Presently Stanton said: "Chuck, you know somethin'? That boy Tony of yours. He's getting to look the hell of a lot like me."

The other chuckled.

"Ruth and me, we don't say nothing about that," he said.

"I guess you're the only people in all Hazel that don't."

"So what?" said Chuck. "There's nothing anybody can do about it now. I reckon we were all just a little bit hasty in those days."

"Maybe we were. Anyway it's all come out all right."

There was a short silence, and then Chuck said, "You never going to get married, Stan?"

"I guess I will one day. There aren't too many girls around the places where I work," Stanton said. . . .

On Stanton's last day before leaving for Australia, his father said: "Got a minute to spare?"

"Sure, Dad."

They went into the office.

His father closed the door. "I wanted to talk without your mother hearing everything," he said. "You all right in your job?"

The geologist opened his eyes. "Sure," he

Continued on page 52

In the first *This Is Your Life*, Ralph Edwards congratulates Eamonn. Personalities from Eamonn's past include (far right) John Callaghan from the insurance firm where Eamonn worked

When Eamonn had a problem, he often confided in his sister Kathleen. Once, when he went to a football match, she unwillingly told the firm that he was ill. Later, Eamonn had to see the boss

This Is My Life (2)

I gamble on three jobs at once

by EAMONN ANDREWS
as told to WILFRED GREATOREX

As an insurance man, actor and broadcaster, I was living on a tightrope: every slip brought trouble

EVEN before the fight started that Friday night in 1941, I was in trouble. As I clambered through the ropes in the National Stadium, Dublin, for the middleweight semi-final of the All-Ireland Junior Boxing Championships, I was too preoccupied even to run the rule over my opponent in the other corner.

I was nineteen and, like most young men in the first flush of career-building, I was prone to crises of my own making. Leading a tightrope existence between the work I was paid to do as an insurance clerk and the work I enjoyed doing in the theatre and, more particularly, broadcasting, I was taking on too much for my own good and for the satisfaction of those above me at the Hibernian Insurance Co.

Often, my job and my real interests clashed, and landed me on the plush carpet of the general manager's office to explain away my shortcomings. Normally, I managed to talk myself out of trouble as it arose—but it was luck I needed now more than blarney.

Both as a senior schoolboy, then as an insurance tyro, I had pestered Radio Eireann for the chance to commentate on boxing. Finally, they had let me in, and though fight broadcasts were few and far between, I was getting them—at two guineas a time. I had already contracted to cover the All-Ireland Junior Championships when, as a committee member, I went to a meeting of the St. Andrew's Boxing Club, where I had learned to defend myself—and found myself the centre of a problem. We had no middleweight entrant.

The faces round the table turned towards me. I had cut down my boxing to preserve an unmarked and businesslike appearance for my job as welcoming factotum at the Hibernian office.

"What about it, Eamonn?" someone asked.

"Well, I. . . ."

"Fine, you're in."

As there seemed little prospect that I would survive the eliminating bouts in the days preceding the Friday semi-finals and finals, I was not unduly perturbed. To the surprise of my club colleagues, however, and to my own embarrassment, I did get through—and now here was I, sitting on a stool in the ring a quarter of an hour before I was due on the air with my commentary.

Trying to reassure me, my second—a jovial, chubby-faced, long-standing friend called Hedy Nolan—thrust his wrist watch under my nose: vaguely, I registered that I had more time than I thought. What I didn't know until afterwards was that he had put back his watch. Just about this time, the Radio Eireann engineer up in the broadcasting box was frantically telephoning the studios with the news that the commentator had not turned up.

Perhaps it was because I had no anxieties about the outcome of the fight that I won it. No sooner had the decision been given than I ducked through the ropes and hared through the aisles and up the stairs.

The engineer was thunderstruck when I charged in, a commentator breathless before he began and wearing ring vest and trunks. There were forty seconds to go. My lungs were still doing overtime as I opened the commentary, and

Eamonn in Dublin with Hedy Nolan, a school friend. Hedy sometimes acted as second in Eamonn's boxing matches

Jack Doyle and his wife Movita. When Eamonn wanted to interview him, he gained admission with a faked pass

it was some minutes before I could settle down.

As I described the cruiserweight fight that followed my own, Hedy tiptoed into the box, towelled me down and tried to pull on my trousers. I wriggled my legs to help him, hoping that the effort would not show in my voice. Somehow, those forty-five minutes came to an end, and I went to the dressing-room to prepare for my final. I got the decision in that, too; but the thrill of it was gone. I was anxious rather than exhilarated, convinced that this night's work must mean the end of the road for me as a commentator.

I worried over it that night at home at Fairbrother's Fields, and next morning, at the tiny desk in front of the underwriters and policy-writers, I awaited the signal from a friend that would indicate that there was a call for me in the quiet office that I had arranged to use for private telephone conversations. None came. Presently, my fears so consumed me that I slipped out and put through a call myself. The voice at the other end was polite but firm. "It was a stupid thing to do," it said. Then: "Don't let it happen again. Next time, keep out of the ring." The hint that there *was* to be a next time was all I wanted to hear.

My outside interests encroached more and more on office time. In our last year at school, a number of us had formed a drama group called Blue-White Productions, and we had kept it alive. Now it was decided to put on a play that I had been hatching for years, *The Moon Is Black*, about a man on the dole who goes about speaking poetry and whose beautiful wife is dying from a serious illness. He decides to kill her to preserve her beauty. For the part of this tortured man we had enrolled a young actor from the National University named Noel de Chenu.

It was just twelve days before the opening that Noel came perplexedly into the Hibernian front office. I greeted him formally as if he were a client. Leaning close over the desk so that the other clerks would not hear that it was not insurance we were discussing but a play, he explained that the provost had warned him that his acting was interrupting his studies. "If I play the part," he said, "I'll probably be hoofed out of the university."

Reluctantly, I saw his point. It meant taking the part myself.

My father, who had just come through recurring bouts of illness, was producing the show. We tried to keep what we were doing a secret from the rest of the family, but in such a small house this was impossible: our nightly rehearsals in the front parlour must have been obvious to everyone.

The modern tendency to throw lines away would infuriate my father, and he would demonstrate how I should put it across. Constantly he would say: "Declaim it! I can't hear what you're saying."

ALREADY, I had established beyond reasonable doubt that I was no actor, and there was the further complication that I was now known as an amateur boxing champion more than anything.

Sure enough, the critics took the play apart, and one remarked on "this hunk of manhood trying to be a poetry-spouting neurotic." Another wiseacre noted that everyone had to get the measles out of his system sometime, and that as I had shed mine in *The Moon Is Black* I might now be expected to write a decent play.

These observations stung, but I was too involved in the problems associated with my insurance job and with my efforts to break into other fields of broadcasting to worry about them very much.

The radio bug had bitten deep, and I was hounding the drama and variety departments of Radio Eireann, pushing myself as an actor and foisting on them my ideas for quizzes and radio parlour games. Nothing worth while came from this salesmanship. I did get one or two single-line parts to say, but when I suggested bigger rôles it was always pointed out that these entailed attending rehearsals in mid-afternoon. While this may have been a polite way of brushing me off, I saw it only as evidence that my job with the Hibernian was getting seriously in the way.

I loathed the work—and filing most of all. Daily I had to wade through files in the cold basement strong-room to turn up papers needed to amend policies, and every morning the traffic would be the other way, distributing files back into their pigeonholes. This was murder—murder in the dungeon.

One morning, I had put several files away when it occurred to me that I was the only person in the strong-room. I lit a cigarette, sat back, and noticed the rows of still unused boxes and pigeonholes at the far end of the room. I chose the one farthest away from the sections in use, and therefore the least likely to come into operation, for some time at any rate, and dumped the rest of the files there. When I got back upstairs a senior clerk asked, "Filing done?"

I nodded a lie.

Next day, I was given another thick batch of files to store away. Some I filed, and some I didn't. I added to my secret stockpile, and had a smoke.

This filing without tears was bound to have its consequences, and one day a clerk unavailingly sought a file and then reported it missing. I overheard him, and quietly slipped down to the dump. I turned up the missing documents and took them upstairs, handing them over to the

Continued on page 43

SPANGLES the modern way to buy sweets 3d

Watchdogs on the trawlers' beat

Captain Robin's eight ships patrol from the Arctic to Land's End. Their crews serve Britain's fishing fleets as nursemaids and police

by DON EVERITT

IN a choppy sea one midsummer night last year, Her Majesty's Minesweeping Motor Launch Watchful, wearing the blue and yellow quartered pendant of the Royal Navy's Fifth Fishery Protection Squadron, patrolled the three-mile territorial limit of Rye Bay, Sussex, a happy poaching ground for Continental fishermen. Just after dark, the launch's radar picked up a vessel ahead which could not be seen from the deck. She had obviously dowsed her lights.

Lieutenant-Commander Thomas Bateman, Watchful's captain, set a course at full throttle for the mystery ship. He estimated that she lay half a mile inside territorial waters. At close quarters, Watchful threw on her searchlight. In the beam lay a French trawler, with her nets out.

In French, Bateman called the trawler master on his loud hailer. "You are fishing half a mile inside British territorial limits. You are under arrest." The swell prevented the commander from putting a boarding party on the trawler; instead he told the master to put on his lights, haul in his nets and sail for Newhaven.

The Frenchman set off quietly, with Watchful following. Suddenly, his lights went out again. On Watchful's radar, Bateman picked him up going pell-mell for the open Channel.

The launch caught up with him after twenty minutes, and Bateman flashed a signal to the master to stop. Despite this, the trawler kept going, so Bateman loaded a rifle and fired two shots across the Frenchman's bows. That stopped him. Later, in court, his poaching cost him a £20 fine, and the confiscation of his nets and his catch.

From the Arctic to the French coast, from Greenland to Norway, the ships of the Fifth Fishery Protection Squadron keep a continuous vigil over Britain's fishing interests. It is an unpublicized but important naval duty. Since 1919, the squadron has acted as a combined police and nursing service to the fishing fleets of Britain, and, when occasion has demanded, to other fleets which fish North European waters.

It is a hard job, for the average trawler skipper is the most rugged and intractable man afloat. He fishes even in rough weather, and he does not take kindly to the idea of himself or his catch being "protected."

LAST year, a mile and a half off St. Ives, the squadron's ship Squirrel found scores of lobster pots which belonged to none of the local Cornish fishermen. Squirrel lay in wait for the owner. He turned out to be a Frenchman.

The next day, Penzance magistrates fined the master and confiscated his catch and his pots. The Frenchmen accordingly deposited the pots on the quay and sailed away. Late at night they returned to harbour, found the pots where they had left them and, to the amusement of a few bystanders, retrieved them and disappeared.

The Fishery Protection Squadron consists of six Algerine class ocean minesweepers, the launch Watchful, and Squirrel, a motor fishing vessel. The tiddlers, as the squadron calls Watchful and Squirrel, pound a beat stretching from Lowestoft through the Straits of Dover to the Scilly Isles. The minesweepers cover the North Sea, the Atlantic coast and the other fishing grounds.

The squadron's commanding officer, Captain Alastair Douglas Robin, has his headquarters in the minesweeper Coquette. In Hull he has a naval secretary who maintains a liaison with the fishing industry. Robin works out the squadron's patrols in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

The squadron performs a mixture of legal and philanthropic duties. In addition to hunting

Continued on page 42

Lieutenant-Commander Thomas Bateman, with six poachers already to his credit, brings H.M.S. Watchful alongside a suspect trawler

JOHN BULL PHOTOGRAPH BY LAWRENCE HANLEY

Sophonisba gave him a stony glance. "Perhaps you will take orders from the Hussars, Mr. Fletcher," she said

No steam for Miss Paget

A railway across her family estate? Never, thought Sophonisba. She'd show young Duncan Fletcher he had met his match *by CLIVE BURNLEY*

"SOPHIE," declared Major Paget, "I'll see Lord Brewer tomorrow—I'll set off for London in the morning." His daughter, Sophonisba, regarded him with tranquil grey eyes.

"And while I play the statesman," he went on, with a martial gesture, "you must stay here and play the general. If that villain Fletcher dares to show himself, you know what to do. If necessary, have Fargo shoot him. Defend your inheritance!"

"Very well, Father," she answered in a matter-of-fact tone. "I'll do that."

Thus were the plans laid for the Battle of Bilbo Lane, that stirring encounter which took place in a corner of Berkshire that stifling summer in the 1840s.

Major Paget not only believed that every Englishman's home was his castle; he had a castle to prove it—perhaps a fraudulent one, its neo-Gothic façade never so much as dinted by an arrowhead, but a castle all the same, with a finer array of crenellations and machicolations than many a genuine example.

Around it lay the little empire of Paget-land; the tenant farms, the villages of Ladyworth and King's Brading, all as far as the eye could reach, yielding tribute to its sovereign under the Queen, Major Hector.

Was not this secure, this tranquil dominion? Built upon tradition, buttressed by wealth, well regarded by its peasantry, it could surely be threatened by none. Who in the wide world, now that Napoleon was dead, could dare to attack it? Only the wretch, the villain, the bandit Fletcher. . . .

In recent years, ulcers of the North and Midlands, those distant parishes of soot and tall chimneys, had burst, pouring out this infection of fantastic railway lines along the valleys of England. It was, of course, a Bubble, declared the major, puffed up by usurers and speculators for their own profit. It would beggar millions before it was done.

Everywhere new lines were projected, every day more Bills were promoted, more survey parties were out trespassing and marauding, until now at last the guerrillas of the New Order came skirmishing up to the bounds of Mountferris Castle itself, startling the major clean out of his luxurious seclusion.

The attack had opened with some correspondence in which the Midland and Six Counties Railway Company had indicated, as if conferring a boon, that it desired to survey a line through Mountferris Park. The major had replied without ambiguity.

Next had come a personal visit from a baronet of charm and breeding—how could such a man allow himself to serve the vast fraud of steam?—a visit that ended on a note which a

The major found his daughter highly indignant. "Father," she said. "I've had a rather disagreeable experience"

decade earlier might have meant pistols at ten paces. Last, the most dangerous of all, there had come the scoundrel Fletcher.

Duncan Fletcher was no doubt a descendant of Border moss-troopers; a large young man with vulgarly vast hands and a solid-jowled face of casually chipped rock masquerading as flesh, in which dark, penetrating eyes and a thick, strong mouth smiled half humorously, half contemptuously.

Appearing in the district at the head of a body of desperadoes, he had carried all before him until he had come to the fences of the Mountferris estate. Major Paget called him a brigand, a hired bravo of the speculators; Sophonisba thought him a self-educated coal-heaver and found his northern tongue laughable. He had dared to imply that he would survey his line with or without the major's consent, and when threatened with a horse-whipping had dryly advised the use of a very long whip.

The major had realized by this time that he would be forced to use the last and ultimate weapon, that intangible but never-failing bludgeon: *Influence*. Therefore, behold him rattling over the gritty lanes of Berkshire, Londonwards, in his carriage with the coat of arms on the doors, in haste to whisper in the ear of Lord Brewer, that staunch upholder of the landed interest.

ILLUSTRATED BY EDWIN PHILLIPS

Meantime Sophonisba Paget prepared to defend Mountferris Castle in accordance with her promise. She had more than a suspicion that her father's views upon railways were, if not certainly wrong, at least unfashionable; but she vied with him in condemnation of the rascal Fletcher. He had an assurance out of all proportion to his station in life and had once looked at her in a way which she was not sure she would have permitted even from the officers of the Hussars at Carbury.

No doubt his size and purposefulness—a somewhat ungentlemanly quality—were sufficient to intimidate certain lower orders of men, and women too, perhaps, but not the Pagets, who had come over with the Conqueror and had been issuing their orders ever since. She looked forward to the opportunity of making this clear to him.

But for two days following the major's departure no such chance arose. It was on the afternoon of the third, the very day appointed for his return, that the hour of crisis came.

A groom, clattering up to Mountferris in a swirl of yellow dust, raised the alarm a little before three o'clock. Fletcher had attempted a direct frontal attack in Bilbo Lane, but Fargo, the head gamekeeper, had rapidly mobilized his men and was holding his own.

Sophonisba instantly ordered all male servants to the battlefield with the exception of the groom, whom she dispatched at once to the nearest magistrates; then, quite fearless, she stepped with a swish and froth of petticoats into the landau and ordered the coachman to take her to Bilbo Lane.

THERE she found armed truce prevailing. Along the eastern hedge of the grassy thoroughfare were ranged the Mountferris Militia—gamekeepers in green with jays' feathers in their hats, carrying shotguns and cudgels; grooms and stable boys with whips; and in the forefront the reassuring bulk of Fargo, a huge red-faced man with bright yellow hair.

Less numerous, but more diabolical in appearance, the Steam Irregulars guarded the opposite hedge; one a man so lank and long-necked he looked already once hanged, carrying a leather case by a strap over his shoulder; another an unshaven Irishman with a patch over one eye and a billhook in his belt; a third a malicious-faced hunchback carrying measuring chains. There were also four blunt-nosed navigators

Continued on page 41

Mohammed Idris el-Senussi might bind together the peoples of Libya. But, the king is an unworldly scholar, and no man of action

CROSSROADS OF THE WORLD

King Idris rules a paper kingdom

One vote set up the strange, empty state of Libya. Now it is five years old—a kingdom that may one day become a nation

by HARRY HOPKINS

Arabs with the tent which is their home. Given houses, some families use them for their cattle, and live in tents alongside

THE great Libyan scrap iron business has just about "had it." Rust-encrusted tanks still litter the remoter desert; but it costs too much to cut them up and move them—only one scrap-iron ship a month sails from Benghazi now. But millions of mines still lie buried in the sands. Ancient green-painted Volkswagens like large tin bath-tubs on wheels still scuttle around the shell-pocked streets of Benghazi. Blond young Germans in sun-bleached shorts stroll about the pavements as if on leave from the Afrika Korps. "VIVA IL DUCE!" scrawled in old black paint across a wall looks across the street to a neat white traffic sign, "NUR EINE RICHTUNG"—"One Way Only."

Time is telescoped in Benghazi; but, after a while, one sees that this is not, after all, just a lull in the fighting. Here and there a new note has been added. Placid British army wives with young children in tow, walk under the marble-columned arcades, pausing to chat or to place orders in the well-stocked grocers' shops. The blond young Germans, it emerges, are clerks and mechanics employed on contract by the British forces in their Libya base. And even if the letter-boxes are painted green, they bear the words "Next Collection." Overlaying a thousand echoes of the desert war, the prevailing tone is now one of British suburban calm: somewhere, one feels, there are crumpets for tea.

Evacuating Egypt under the new treaty, British forces have in recent months been steadily moving into their new bases along Libya's long

This teacher at a new boarding school is an Egyptian. At first, Libya had just thirteen university graduates. There were no administrators, no specialists, hardly any decent clerks

strategic coastline, commanding the Mediterranean crossroads. In Derna, Benghazi, Berca, Homs, Tripoli and other places deep-etched on the memories of old Desert Rats a new generation of British soldiers is being bitten by the sand-flies and dreaming of cosy Naafis left behind in the Canal Zone. Supplied with water by pipeline, the R.A.F.'s desert airfield at El Adem forms with Idris outside Tripoli a link in the chain of air staging posts by which British forces can be switched swiftly about the world.

Now, at Wheelus Field, a few miles east of Tripoli, the British have been joined by the Americans. Wheelus Field is the biggest U.S. base in Africa—and it is still being extended. It has ten thousand Americans and their dependents, more than two thousand Libyan employees, four hundred permanent buildings and twenty miles of paved internal roads. During daylight hours planes take off and land at the rate of one a minute.

But if Libya is today increasingly important to the West as a base, it has another—and in the long-run perhaps more far-reaching—importance. It embodies a new approach to what we are pleased to call the Arab Problem. An optimist might even claim Libya as evidence that the world has progressed a little between 1919 and 1950.

But it was a near thing.

After the second World War it looked for a while that the Great Power carve-up of the Arab world that followed the first World War was about to repeat itself. Worried about nationalism in their own North African colonies, the French were for restoring Libya to Italy. The Russian bloc had its own hand to play. Then, Ernest Bevin did a deal with Count Sforza in London: Italy was to get the trusteeship of Tripolitania, the French of the Fezzan, the British of Cyrenaica.

On May 18, 1949—a fateful day for Libya—this agreement was submitted clause by clause to the United Nations' Assembly. All went well till the clause handing back Tripolitania to Italian administration was reached. Haiti and India—which had abstained in the Political Committee—changed their votes to negatives. The clause failed by one vote—and *Sharia Haiti* is one of the principal streets in Tripoli today.

Thus, on Christmas Eve, 1951, Emir—King-designate — Mohammed Idris el-Senussi proclaimed Libya's independence in Benghazi—and the United Nations' first child was born.

No birth was ever attended by so many highly qualified obstetricians. Adrian Pelt, the Dutch U.N. Commissioner and his seven-nation Advisory Council — instructed to prepare Libya for independence by January, 1952—laboured long and devotedly. Reports poured out by the ton. Yet the results, it must be admitted, were a trifle odd.

The new constitution was federal in form. That meant that Libya was required to support four separate governmental machines—three for the provinces and one at the centre—four cabinets, four chief ministers and so on. Yet there were at this time just thirteen Libyan university graduates. No administrators, no specialists, hardly even any decent clerks. Also, there was no money. The Libyan economy, as a U.N. report put it, was "deficitary to an extraordinary degree."

One commodity, however, Libya did have in abundance: space—flat, limitless and strategic. This, sold well and in the best markets, has proved her salvation. In return for a twenty-year treaty of peace, friendship and close alliance giving the right to keep large forces under her own administration in a number of "agreed lands," Britain—who in fact had been plugging the holes in Libyan budgets since VE-day—undertook to go on doing so with a subsidy of £3,750,000 a year. To this the Americans added their yearly cheque for forty million dollars—making a total amounting to £15 for every Libyan man, woman and child a year. Indirect benefits in local wages and purchases are also impressive.

So the new nation was able to live and, possibly, to build the foundations of its future. But the word "nation" perhaps anticipates a little. For the United Nations' first child, if now out of its oxygen tent, continues to exhibit a certain lack of co-ordination in the movement of its limbs. According to Adrian Pelt's constitution, it is the "United Kingdom of Libya"; but, to the dispassionate observer, it often seems that the "Dis-united Kingdom" would be a more accurate label.

There is Cyrenaica, a vast empty land, dominated by the bedouin tribes who populate it. More than half its people are nomadic or semi-nomadic, following their flocks in search of water and grazing. The Italians have gone—and are absolutely barred from returning. In their absence, Benghazi—despite the British families—has the air of a ghost-town; its shopkeepers are disconsolate.

Tripoli, on the other hand, eight hundred miles away across the desert and the Gulf of Sirte, remains, superficially at least, an Italian city. The bedouin gestures of hand over forehead and heart give way to Italian gesticulation and even the shoe-blacks and gharry drivers

Hopkins watched the crowds greeting King Idris outside the Khould Palace when he visited Tripoli after his second marriage

prattle away in Italian. The Tripolitanian townsmen are more docile, sophisticated and tend to look towards Berberized North Africa as the bedouins of Cyrenaica look eastwards towards Egypt and Arabia.

The third province, the Fezzan (population, fifty thousand), a group of date-growing oases, lies far to the south across a wide expanse of desert. There is a fortnightly plane from Tripoli; otherwise it is a lorry journey of several days over hazy roads. In the Fezzan, the Arabs meet the veiled Tuaregs and the negroid peoples of Equatorial Africa. And here Italian influence changes to French.

The Libyans themselves do not always seem entirely convinced of their country's unity. Trouble-makers in Cyrenaica may be "deported" to Tripolitania. Passports are demanded in passing from one province to another. And such was the mutual suspicion between Cyrenaica and Tripolitania that neither could allow the Libyan capital to go to the other. Hence the compromise of joint capitals, which entails packing up the entire federal government, parliament, foreign embassies and so on and moving them at intervals in fleets of buses and lorries over the eight hundred-mile desert road that separates Tripoli and Benghazi.

Today the flag that flies over the battered colonnades and chipped triumphal pillars of Mussolini's ex-New Roman Empire is red, black and green. The black stripe, which carries a crescent in white, is the flag of the Senussi

Continued on page 38

RICHARD DIMBLEBY
and PERCY THROWER
introduce John Bull's

EASTER GUIDE FOR WEEKEND GARDENERS

Percy Thrower gives Richard Dimbleby expert advice on propagating dahlias by tuber division

THREE years ago, I introduced a JOHN BULL gardening guide and I made it clear that I did not claim to be much of a gardener. The same is true today—but I remain always ready to try something new. I have even tried to grow mushrooms, though perhaps we had better draw a veil over that.

Surely the whole joy of gardening is that it can be done by anyone almost anywhere. No matter whether you have a huge park full of magnificent trees, rhododendron walks and vast herbaceous borders, or only a window-box on a top-floor sill in a back street of a smoky city, you can enjoy the growth and development of a plant or a flower, sharing the feeling of achievement.

My own most recent success merely consisted of cutting a small lump from a battered cactus, thrusting it into the pot alongside its parent and finding, rather to my surprise, that it began to grow.

For weeks, my wife's mother, who is one of the best gardeners I know, has been at her skilful work in her lovely garden at Copthorne, in Sussex. My wife is digging, planting and weeding in the garden of our Hampshire farm. We are all gardeners: we share one of the world's greatest joys and relaxations.

Richard Dimbleby

DETACH THIS SUPPLEMENT AND KEEP FOR REFERENCE

PERCY THROWER shows how to

SAVE TIME, MONEY and ENERGY

Flowers and vegetables can be grown to a simple plan by the "four-times-a-year" amateur

A GARDEN with a neat, smooth lawn and flower beds packed with colour is always admired, but it usually has a drawback. The maintenance becomes a burden. Digging, weeding and other jobs take so long that the amateur gardener is tempted to give up in despair.

This problem of seeking good results in limited time is faced by many people nowadays. It can be solved very easily, though. Despite what some old-fashioned textbooks suggest, gardening need not mean tedious labour or backache. It is simply a matter of tackling jobs in the right way and choosing plants, shrubs and trees which need little or no attention.

Several busy friends of mine, for example, are "four-times-a-year" gardeners—yet they get bold displays from spring right through to the autumn. They have freed themselves from duties more arduous than occasional weeding and pruning by using the technique of permanent planting which I often recommend in my TV programmes. Some of their flower beds are stocked with roses, like *Border King*, a brilliant scarlet which grows to a maximum height of 3 ft.; *Fashion*, a beautiful salmon orange, and *Frensham*, a deep crimson. Between the rose bushes are bulbs such as tulips, daffodils and narcissi. In other beds are herbaceous perennials—kniphofia (red-hot pokers), polyanthus, Russell lupins, irises, michaelmas daisies and saxifraga.

Such labour-saving partnerships of plants and bulbs can be left alone to work happily on the gardener's behalf for eight or ten years.

Perhaps the greatest fun in gardening comes from creating a new garden from scratch, or replanning an existing one. An elaborate drawing is unnecessary. Make a rough plan on a scale of about 1 in. to 10 ft., and mark in the house, flower beds, hedges, vegetable plot and paths. I much prefer curved garden paths to straight ones, and believe that they should always lead to a definite destination like a sundial or a shed—which, incidentally, can be camouflaged very easily. A plant most suitable for the job is the blackberry. Trained along four or five strands of wire stretched between posts, it soon provides a thick screen which yields fruit from July to October.

At one time, the preparation of a garden involved days, weeks and perhaps months of really strenuous digging, but there are now rotary cultivators which will break up rough ground and reduce it to almost a seed-bed finish in one operation. The machines can be hired from contractors, who will do an average-size garden in two hours for a total cost in the region of £1.

If the ground is ordinary agricultural land, there is no need to add special fertilizers. The existing growth is a quick guide to the condition of the soil. Plenty of grass and weeds indicate that the soil is right for growing what *you* want. In any case, avoid using strong weedkillers like sodium chlorate. They certainly destroy weeds, but they kill the earth as well. It is impossible to plant anything successfully for at least five months afterwards.

Paths of crazy paving or gravel alone are, I'm afraid, just asking for trouble. There will be weeds for as long as the paths remain. The best alternative is to dig the area of each path to a depth of 6 in. or 8 in. and fill it with about 2 in. of stones, bits of tile and other solid rubbish which is always coming to the surface in gardens. Cover these with about one inch of gravel and seal it by pouring on a coal tar compound, of which there are several on the market. Decorate with a sprinkling of gravel, and you get a trouble-free path.

Lawns.—Strips of grass along the sides of paths and between flower beds can be a nuisance because they demand constant attention. A lawn is a far less troublesome proposition—though judging from some of the cherished beliefs on the subject, one might imagine that a perfect lawn is virtually unattainable. This is not true. The making of a lawn in an average garden is no more difficult than the planting of flowers. A drainage system or elaborate levelling are quite unnecessary. A lawn with slight undulations is more interesting than one which is as flat as a billiard table.

Undoubtedly the speediest method of getting a lawn is turf, which must be laid on a firm, even surface and costs about four shillings per square yard, including labour. However, growing one from seed can be done in three or four months, if the correct times of year are chosen for sowing. These are during April or May, or from mid-August to the end of September. Good seed, such as *Fescues*, or *Brown Tops*, will spread well with fine blades and cost between five and six shillings a pound.

Prepare the ground by forking it over to a depth of not more than six inches, treading it to break down any large lumps and raking it as finely and evenly as possible. If the soil is poor, rake in a lawn fertilizer, of which many are available, allowing one ounce per square yard. After the seed has been scattered evenly at a rate of two ounces per square yard and raked in, nothing more need be done—apart from stretching black cotton between sticks to scare off birds—until the grass is about one inch high. It can then be rolled lightly.

Rockeries are not included by some people in their garden plan because they feel that it means piling up huge mounds of earth. A rockery looks more effective, and less artificial, if it consists of only a few big stones, some arranged six inches or so higher than the rest. This setting is ideal for plants like *anchusa, dianthus, geum, primula* and *erica*, which will thrive unattended.

In fact, ericas—or heathers—have many more labour-saving uses than decorating rockeries. They are low-growing, eager spreaders, and apart from the advantage of covering the soil, thus reducing the amount of weeding and cultivating, they provide colour in the garden even during the winter months when outdoor flowers are scarce.

Plant them twelve inches or eighteen inches apart as a quick, easy means of covering "problem" spaces like slopes. The following selection will ensure flowers throughout the year: *Erica carnea Springwood White* (white, January-April), *Erica Mediterranean hybrida Darleyensis* (pale flesh, January-April), *Erica carnea* (flesh pink, March-April), *Erica cinera coccinea* (bright red, June-August), *Erica ciliaris hybrida H. Maxwell* (bright pink, June-October), *Erica cinerea purpurea* (purple, August-September), *Erica vulgaris alba Serleii* (white, September-October), *Erica vulgaris Goldsworth crimson* (crimson, October-November) and finally, for the new year, *Erica carnea gracilis* (Italian pink, December-April).

Shrubs.—The same trouble-saving technique of permanent planting also applies to shrubs. These, too, if carefully chosen, will flower over the whole twelve months.

For example: *Mahonia japonica*, the winter-flowering *Berberis*, has lemon yellow flowers with a lily-of-the-valley scent from December to March; *Pernettya muncronata* is a dwarf evergreen with white, heather-like flowers from May onwards, which turn into white and purple berries; *Olearia Haastii*, another evergreen, has white flowers during July and August; *Caryopteris clandonensis* is a mass of bright blue flowers from August to September, and *Viburnum fragrans* produces

Secrets of

Gibson (left) with Geoffrey Nicholls, organizer of the Southport Flower Show

Fred Gibson, a well-known amateur gardener at Formby, Lancashire, specializes in roses. He has 1,302 hybrids in sixty-eight varieties. They have won him a National Rose Society challenge cup for three years running, and a Royal Horticultural Society medal at the Southport Flower Show every year since 1950.

"Roses are among the cheapest, hardiest and most rewarding of plants," he says. "Even with rigorous pruning, a five-shilling rose will give twelve good blooms a year and last for ten years."

He has thirty rose beds. When he took over his garden eight years ago, he had the existing light soil removed to a depth of 2 ft. and replaced with richer soil which would stimulate his plants into growing the best blooms. He has found that it suits his roses—*Golden Melody*, a pale yellow, is one of his favourites—to prune them between February 25 and March 25. He gives the beds a good dressing of manure in the spring, and another, of artificial manure, in the summer. Continual forking aerates the soil and keeps the beds looking fresh.

His garden is L-shaped, protected by tall surrounding trees, and covers a total of one and a half acres. Gibson, who is a paint manufacturer, makes a point of doing at least one job in it every day. "By far the easiest approach to gardening is to do a little at a time. Then the work never becomes a burden," he says.

Even though he employs a full-time gardener, visitors are often surprised that such a large garden is maintained at a high standard. Beds of perennials, such as lupins and delphiniums, help to reduce work. "Perhaps my greatest time-saver," he says, "is a diary of jobs for the whole year. I make a note of everything which is done, so that I know what to do on the same day the following year." In Lancashire, plants are usually three weeks later than those in the south of England. Roses, for example, bloom from mid-June to November.

A small lean-to greenhouse on the south side of his house provides pot plants for indoors, and ten cold frames supply seedlings and cuttings. He estimates that, excluding his gardener's wages, his garden costs less than £2 a week to run. A vegetable garden, which he keeps in good condition by rotating the crops, so that the same type of vegetable is not grown in the same bed for two successive years, supplies him throughout the year. It is separated from the rest of the garden by a beech hedge, 5 ft. high. The hedge is slow-growing, but easy to cultivate, and it holds its attractive golden foliage all the winter.

green-fingered gardeners

John Mills and his playwright wife, Mary Hayley Bell, have a terraced garden about 100 yd. long and 50 yd. wide on the top of Richmond Hill, Surrey. They keep it up to exhibition standard—it is opened to the public every May — by labour-saving methods.

The five terraces, which slope towards a fine view of the Thames below, are flanked by two long borders filled with hardy perennials—pyrethrum, lupins, flag irises, delphiniums, phlox, michaelmas daisies and others—which thrive with a minimum of trouble.

There are also many climbers and shrubs which need little attention. These range from winter flowering jasmine—which started to bloom on Christmas Day—to forsythia, camellias, wistaria and a lavender hedge round the top stone terrace.

Bedding plants are grown from seed. "One trip with a wheelbarrow uphill from the greenhouse at the foot of the garden used to feel like a day's work," says Geoff Pickersgill, the Mills' gardener. "I changed my routine." The plants are now grown in a conservatory next to the house, and wheeled downhill to the bed.

Last November, Pickersgill planted a hundredweight of daffodil bulbs on the edges of the lawn under the walnut tree. In return for the leaves being allowed to die back naturally after flowering, they will bloom every year.

Whenever they have time, John Mills and his wife help by weeding and picking off dead flowers, but because they have a four hundred-acre farm in Kent, which also has a garden, they leave most of the work at Richmond to Pickersgill.

One of the showpieces is a large group of fifty orange and pinky red azalea bushes, and Mills opens the garden to the public in azalea-time for charity. He gave an undertaking to continue this arrangement when he took the house six years ago. "It was already a show garden then—but not as good as it is now."

Edward Eastment has a prizewinning garden at Blechynden Mews, Kensington, London, which never gets the sun for more than two and a half hours a day. It is a concrete yard, about 12 ft. wide and 36 ft. long, which lies between his house and a high railway viaduct. But it faces south, acts as a sun-trap in summer when the sun gets round to it, and is aflame with flowers.

His beds are eight tubs, nine boxes, an old metal cornbin, three hanging baskets, six dozen 12 in. flower pots and seven small containers of various sizes. In his limited spare time—he is a furniture remover—he fills them with colour by planning.

On weekdays, his wife helps in the garden by removing dead leaves and picking back flowers to prevent them from going to seed. On summer evenings, Eastment waters and hoes. His routine on Sunday mornings is to move around plants on the east side, where there is a maximum of only twenty minutes' sunshine daily, so that each enjoys a fair share of light.

By this means, he successfully raises plants which include roses, delphiniums, phlox, sweet peas, begonias, antirrhinums, lilium regaliums, fuchsia, gladioli and godetia. "I have to content myself with those which don't mind some shade."

When Eastment decided to start a garden, he had to find some soil. He solved this problem by begging sackfuls from the gardeners of big houses during his work. Then he made his containers—oil barrels cut in half and washed out with caustic soda, and boxes made by simple carpentry.

Eastment takes pride in keeping the cost of his gardening at a minimum. He spends an average of only 2s. a week on it. His greenhouse, 6 ft. by 5 ft., cost £25 twenty years ago.

Eastment grows the flowers mainly to please his wife, but since entering a gardening competition for the first time three years ago, he has won seven cups, including one for all London.

Albert Johnson welcomed the Queen Mother as she stepped through the garden gate on the corner of Blacklands Road, Lewisham, London, in 1951, when she was visiting the best prefab gardens in the district. Last year, the plot was judged the best-kept prefab garden in the London County Council area.

Johnson, a Thames lighterman, says that his secret of doing a full-time job and maintaining a prizewinning garden is careful planning. On winter evenings he designs his display for the coming year, working out on paper the positions, numbers, heights and colours of plants. He grows them from his own seeds and cuttings in a greenhouse only 6 ft. by 6 ft. Last year, he used 2,537 bedding plants in twenty-two varieties, from asters to zinnias—a selection which, bought by the dozen, would have cost between £45 and £50. "My total bill for seeds and fertilizers was about £5," he says.

When planting his flower beds, he methodically marks off the rows of holes with a line and a measuring stick. Casualties in the ranks are quickly replaced from a hidden bed of reserves. He hoes the beds regularly to discourage weeds, retain moisture and keep the soil looking fresh.

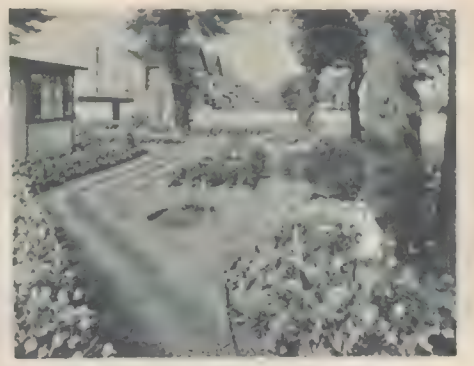
The plot, 40 ft. by 70 ft., was formidable when Johnson tackled it. It had been the site of an air raid shelter. Shadowed by elms, it dipped in the middle and was partly covered with concrete spilt from a mixer. The first year, his few flowers were a failure, so he decided on a drastic programme. He dug over the whole garden, cutting through elm roots, burying rubbish three feet deep to assist drainage, and sieving and levelling the soil.

That autumn, he seeded the whole area with 28 lb. of grass seed, which he bought for 2s. 6d. a pound, and later cut his flower beds in the lawn.

Spending up to eighteen hours a week on the garden he has won six first prizes, three seconds and two thirds—as well as the Royal visit.

Showpiece terraces at Richmond

Prizewinners in a Kensington yard



Prefab champions at Lewisham

pinky-white flowers from October through to March.

Escallonia (white, pink or red flowers) and *Forsythia* (golden yellow) are among the shrubs which also make excellent hedges because they are all the better for being left alone. They prefer a light trim only once a year. *Cupressus Lawsoniana* is another fine hedge which needs clipping only in July. Holly, yew and box are very much slower in growing, while privet, though extremely easy to cultivate and one of the most popular of hedges, has the disadvantage that it must be trimmed four or five times a year.

Flower bed preparation is a job which is sometimes made out to be complicated, but is actually very simple. It is useless to dig beds—or, for that matter, to do any kind of digging in the garden—beyond the depth of a spade. Some gardens have been spoilt by zealous trenching three or four feet deep.

You must, of course, include an herbaceous border in your garden because it is one of the loveliest things in any garden, and a great labour-saver. It can be kept in fine condition for years with merely an annual forking over, weeding and staking, together with a mulching with manure and the division of the larger clumps of such plants as michaelmas daisies and chrysanthemums in November or late February.

Another good policy when planning beds is to rely on annuals, which flower and die in the same year in which the seeds are sown. I recommend *clarkia, larkspur, mignonette,* which has a fine scent, *linaria* and *acroclinium,* an everlasting flower, useful for winter decorations. They are not particular as to the soil and need no protection from the weather if they are sown in the spring.

An easy, reliable method of sowing the seeds is to scatter them in patches and rake them into the ground. When they start to come up, thin them out as they grow and insert sticks between the bigger ones to stop them from being blown over by the wind. From then on, your only work consists of going over the bed with a pair of scissors once a week and cutting off the seed pods to prevent the plants from going to seed and ceasing to flower.

Among Britain's growers of perennials—those hardy plants which die down in the autumn and arise, fresh as ever, in the spring—there is at present fierce competition to produce new varieties of delphiniums. One of the latest and most interesting is *Betty Baseley,* which has rich foliage and short spikes of vivid blue. It needs little or no staking, and, like all delphiniums, will flower again in the early autumn if the first crop is cut away as soon as it has begun to fade.

Other introductions which can be relied upon to thrive without trouble are the *chrysanthemum maximum* (or single white daisy) and dwarf double daisies, of which *World Supreme* and *World Pride* are two recent varieties.

The secret of those long-stemmed sweet peas which are envied at flower shows is an abundance of moisture. Manure, mowings, garden compost and straw or old sacking should be placed under the plants to hold moisture during the summer months.

A simple means of fixing a climbing frame for sweet peas is to suspend a piece of square mesh netting about five feet long and six feet high between two posts, but an innovation from America

Continued on page six

Keep your garden full of Colour

Zinnia.—Flowers in red, orange and many other colours, July-September. Ideal for warm, sunny beds with light rich soil. As with all half-hardy annuals, sow in March-April and transplant to permanent quarters about 9 in. apart in mid-May, but delay until the end of the month if weather is unfavourable. Varieties from 12-30 in. Flowers are excellent for cutting.

Scabious. Pincushion Flower. Thrives almost anywhere, reaching 2-3 ft. with prolific blue, red or white blooms May-September. Either sow seed in April in flowering position or sow in March under glass and plant seedlings 6 in. apart in June for flowers the following year. Does best in sunny, open border. Needs plenty of water in high summer.

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AN AT-A-GLANCE PLAN

PLANT this herbaceous border over Easter. The flowers do not, of course, all bloom at once. They provide a mass of colour from spring to autumn.

An herbaceous border is the ideal labour-saver for any garden. Consisting mainly of vigorous perennials such as lupins and kniphofia, it needs very little maintenance and can be left to bloom annually for three, four or five years.

Choose a position which faces south and has some protection from cold winds. A background —such as a mellowed brick wall or a thick green hedge—shows up the flowers to advantage.

The border should not be less than 4 ft. wide. Plan it boldly in clumps of three or more plants of each kind. The above illustration, though not strictly to scale, shows the placings of plants according to size: the shortest in the front, and the tallest at the back. Dwarf plants need to be about 8 in. apart; medium-sized ones, 16 in., and the largest at least 2 ft. Aim to leave no earth bare—yet avoid overcrowding. Use annuals such as clarkia, asters and stocks to fill any spaces.

When the plants are about to flower, a sprinkling of artificial fertilizer around them will spur the buds to give of their best.

An herbaceous border thrives with watering every other day in dry weather. Dead flowers should be cut at once. Stake tall plants *before* high winds. When the foliage of plants other than evergreens turns yellow, cut to 3 in. from the ground. Dig in manure in November or late February for another fine display the next season.

Japanese Cherry. Exquisite rose or shell-pink flowers March - April. Grows 20 ft. or more in well-drained soil in cool position. Thrives in town gardens and districts with chalk or lime. Plant saplings 25 ft. apart in October-November. Dig holes 18 in. deep, wide enough for roots. Mulch in hot weather. Cut out dead wood and weak shoots in late summer.

Clematis. Climbs vigorously and beautifully 20 ft. or more up walls and trellises. Varieties flower in blues, white or reds April-October. Propagate by cutting, grafting, sowing seed in spring or by layering in summer and planting out in March. Prefers limey well-drained soil facing east, west or north. If position is sunny, lower stem must have shade.

Physalis. Sometimes called Chinese Lantern, Winter Cherry or Cape Gooseberry. Flowers June-October, 20-40 in. high. Increase by root division in spring, or sow seeds in drills 10 in. apart in May-June and transplant seedlings 10 in. apart as soon as large enough. Sunny sheltered position in light, rich soil preferred. Calyxes brilliant red in autumn.

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Anchusa. A hardy sun-loving annual. Can be relied upon for large splashes of pale to rich blue flowers June - October. Sow seeds outdoors in April. Seedlings need to be thinned at least 1 ft. apart as soon as they are large enough to be handled. Extremely easy to grow. anchusa likes a light, sandy soil, but will succeed in almost any well-dug soil.

Aubretia. Profuse pink, purple and white flowers April-June. This hardy evergreen trails willingly in borders, rockeries, in cracks in old walls, between paving stones or as a brilliant carpet to offset bulbs. Propagate by root division after flowering, or sow seed in drills in open May-June. Transplant as soon as large enough. Flowers better in second year.

FOR EIGHT MONTHS OF FLOWERS

SPECIALLY DRAWN FOR JOHN BULL BY RONALD LAMPITT

FIFTY VARIETIES—THE KEY TO A GLORIOUS HERBACEOUS BORDER

1: Helenium autumnale (6 ft.). **2:** Lupin (3 ft.). **3:** Coreopsis grandiflora (2 ft.). **4:** Spiraea (3-5 ft.). **5:** Dwarf lavender (1 ft.). **6:** Sedum spectabile (9 in.). **7:** Funkia (18 in.). **8:** Pyrethrum (2-3 ft.). **9:** Phlox decussata (3 ft.). **10:** Salvia uliginosa (4-5 ft.). **11:** Delphinium elatum (6 ft.). **12:** Achillea (4-5 ft.). **13:** Scabiosa (3 ft.). **14:** Geum (18 in.). **15:** Dianthus alpinus (6 in.). **16:** Inula acaulis (1 ft.). **17:** Helleborus niger (1 ft.). **18:** Trollius (18 in.). **19:** Kniphofia (4 ft.). **20:** Bearded iris (2-3 ft.). **21:** Anemone blanda (6 in.). **22:** Chrysanthemum maximum (4 ft.). **23:** Papaver orientale (4 ft.). **24:** Rudbeckia (4-6 ft.). **25:** Siberian iris (4 ft.). **26:** Oenothera (2 ft.). **27:** Dianthus Caesius (9 in.) **28:** Centaurea (2-2½ ft.). **29:** Phlox decussata (3 ft.). **30:** Verbascum (3 ft.). **31:** Anemone japonica (3 ft.). **32:** Gaillardia (18 in.). **33:** Viola (6 in.). **34:** Primula (18 in.). **35:** Geranium pratense (2 ft.). **36:** Peony (3 ft.). **37:** Althaea rosea (5-7 ft.). **38:** Anchusa italica (2 ft.). **39:** Nepeta (1-2 ft.). **40:** Papaver nudicaule (6-18 in.). **41:** Potentilla nepalensis (4-9 in.). **42:** Rosmarinus humilis (6 in.). **43:** Aster alpinus (6 in.). **44:** Heuchera sanguinea (18 in.-2 ft.). **45:** Aquilegia (2-3 ft.). **46:** Solidago Virgaurea (5-6 ft.). **47:** Delphinium elatum (6 ft.). **48:** Phlox decussata (3 ft.). **49:** Hemerocallis fulvo (2 ft.). **50:** Gypsophila paniculata (3 ft.).

Even when everything in the garden is lovely, there's room for an eye-catching or labour-saving gadget

It's easy to make

COLD FRAME

THREE yards of 36-in. wide transparent plastic (8s. 11d. per yard) reinforced with fine wire netting are needed for a simple cold frame for seedlings, cuttings or young plants. Approximately 40 ft. of 1½ in. planed quartering (6d. per ft.) are required for the framework.

The top of the frame is 1 yd. sq. To provide it with a good

slope to catch the sun and discard the rain, the front of the frame is 9 in. high and the back is 1 ft. 8 in. The horizontal length of both side and back panels is 2 ft. 9 in.

Make wooden frames for the top, sides, front and back to these dimensions, simply nailing the strips together at the corners and painting them to preserve the wood. (Do not use creosote, which kills plants.) Then cut the plastic with scissors to fit. Fix the plastic to the frames with broad-headed nails.

To assemble the frame, bore each upright on each side-panel to take 3-in. screws which will secure the back and front panels. Secure the top with two hinges screwed to the top of the back panel.

SUNDIAL

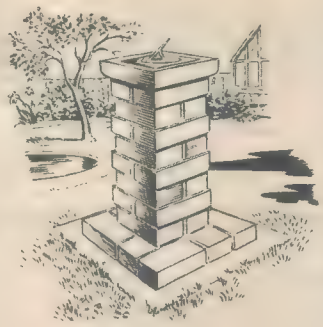
MAKE a sundial easily by mounting a square or round brass dial, 7 in. to 10 in. across, horizontally on a brick pedestal 30 in. high. A dial ready made with a pointer which casts a shadow to indicate the time will cost £2 or more. Two dozen bricks will be required. They cost about 3d. each from a builder.

First, erect a reinforcing core for the pedestal by knocking one end of a 3-ft. length of stout metal tubing into the ground so that about 27 in. is left projecting. Check that it is upright by plumbline or by comparing it from two directions with the corners of buildings.

Next, dig a foundation 2 ft. sq. and about 4 in. deep round the tubing and fill it with cement. Then, when it is dry, arrange eight bricks to form a square single-layer base for the pedestal and fix them in position with mortar cement.

Build the pedestal with sixteen bricks, two in each layer, placing one each side of the tubing, with mortar between. Lay each pair of bricks at right angles to the previous two. The top platform on which the dial is mounted can be a square of stone, or a slab of concrete cut to a circle while wet by using a washbowl like a pastry-cutter.

Do not fix the dial permanently until it is set to tell the



correct time. Some makers supply instructions. Sun time and Greenwich time vary by as much as sixteen minutes. But on April 15, June 15, September 1 and December 24 they coincide, and the dial can be set by the clock.

The dial can be fixed with two round-headed ¼-in. brass screws through holes in its face into wooden plugs inserted into holes in the top platform. Or screw three small L-hooks into wooden plugs to act as clips round the dial.

STEPPING STONES

EASY-TO-LAY stepping stones across a lawn add picturesque contrast to the grass. Estimate the number and positions of the stone slabs required by laying out half-sheets of newspaper about 1 ft. apart and walking on them.

Secondhand York stone, previously used for paving, looks well and can usually be bought from the local council at about £6 a ton for irregular pieces, or £8 a ton for rectangular pieces. Half a ton provides enough for twenty to thirty stepping stones about 15 in. by 18 in., and between 2 in. and 3 in. thick.

Lay the stones on the grass and cut vertically into the turf closely round each one with an old table knife, as deeply as possible. Remove the turf to obtain a hole the shape of the stone. Deepen the hole to a total depth of twice the stone's thickness and half-fill it with clinker, cinders or coarse gravel for drainage. Ram this firmly to prevent the stone from sinking later.

Ensure that the stones are level, and lay them by knocking them level with the lawn with a heavy piece of wood so that the mower can be run over them without damage to its blades.

WATER-LILY TUB

HALF a wooden barrel—approximate cost 30s. from a disposal merchant—can be quickly turned into a miniature water-garden. Scrub it out thoroughly. Then stop any bung holes with corks or wooden plugs inserted from the inside and bore an overflow hole, 1 in. wide, about 4 in. down the rim. Cover the hole on the inside with a metal grille, such as an old tea strainer, tacked to the wood.

Stand the tub on four bricks in a moderately sunny position, away from trees which might drop leaves into the water. A hole in the ground 1 ft. deep and packed with broken bricks, stones or clinker will serve as a drain beneath the overflow outlet. It is inadvisable to paint or creosote the barrel; wood preservatives may upset the plants or fish.

Water plants—five or six will be enough — can be arranged in flower pots at various levels inside the water-filled tub, either standing on bricks or suspended on stout galvanized wire from hooks on the rim. Ideal plants include Canadian water weed (for aeration) marsh marigold, water forget-me-not, bog arum, water hawthorn and dwarf water-lily. Roots cost only 1s. or 2s. The flowers bloom

freely in summer without attention, and can be left in position for years.

One or two goldfish will prevent gnats and mosquitoes from breeding in the water. Water-snails will consume rubbish. Plants and fish will keep the water sweet and will thrive best if the water is left unchanged. Any excessive growth of the plants, or slime on the surface of the water, can be removed in early summer.

BIRD TABLE

A 7-ft. length of 4-in. by 3-in. timber (1s. 6d. per ft.), painted or creosoted to preserve it and set about 2 ft. in the ground, makes a support for a simple bird table. Have it well away from trees

which might encourage stalking cats, and 9 ft. from the nearest window. If it is on a lawn, box the hole with planking 1 in. thick so that the pole can be removed while mowing.

Use a sheet of weather-resisting plywood 2 ft. sq. (1s. 8d. per sq. ft.) for the table—the 1 ft. overlap round the pole will deter any cat—and nail inch-thick battening (1½d. per ft.) round the edge to prevent food from falling off. Also nail a pair of struts, made of 2 in. quartering (6d. per ft.), right across the underside of the table to strengthen the plywood and fit closely on either side of the upright when the table has been nailed in position.

A ½ in. diameter forked twig inserted vertically in a hole drilled through the top of the table into a strut will serve as an alighting perch. Some birds

SAVE TIME, MONEY and ENERGY *Continued from page three*

dispenses with even that. The innovation is dwarf sweet peas, which grow in compact bushes nine inches high and do not require supports. Ideal for bedding and potting, they come in six varieties: *Boy Blue* (mid-blue), *Caprice* (maroon), *Heidi* (bright rose), *Pansy Face* (pink and white bi-colours), *Pollyanna* (cream) and *Sinbad* (navy blue).

Great strides have also been made in evolving new chrysanthemums. The latest varieties include *Brighton Yellow*, which is a heavy cropper, easy to disbud and which flowers in August; *Delia*, which is rose pink and forms strong, upright plants; *Eamonn Andrews*, a bright orange amber, growing to three feet six inches, and *White Wings*, which has beautifully rounded blooms on two-foot stems.

In addition, there are numerous fresh types of dahlias, which cost between 1s. 6d. and 5s. each and are always a good investment. Adaptable to any ordinary soil, but preferring a rich, sandy loam with enough humus in it to hold moisture, the tubers can be replanted year after year. *Baby Fontenau* (pink), *Jescot Jim* (yellow), *Jescot Kenny* (red, with white tips), *Bonny Blue*, *Willy den Ouden* (orange-red) and *Heron* (white and lilac), for instance, are easy to grow and could, if necessary, take pride of place in the part of the garden which provides cut flowers.

A plot about fifteen feet square can provide all the cut flowers a house will need from May to November. I suggest one fifteen-foot row of sweet peas, and, at intervals of eighteen inches or two feet, three or four rows of annuals, one row of herbaceous plants and one of gladioli.

The *Otley Korean* and *Windsor Hybrid* chrysanthemums are not so well known as they might be, but they are exceptionally good for cutting, being almost trouble-free and very hardy. They require neither staking nor disbudding. *Scabiosa Clive Greaves* is a perennial with powder-blue flowers, equally ideal for cutting, which does not take too kindly to being moved. It likes plenty of lime. To obtain the best crops, spread four ounces to six ounces of ground limestone over the soil before planting.

Fertilizers need not be expensive. Good general ones, which contain the three essentials—nitrogen, potash and phosphate—cost twelve shillings for twenty-eight pounds. This amount, used in conjunction with a compost of leaves, garden and kitchen waste, will keep the average garden supplied for a year.

Some of the newest brands embody insecticides to combat wireworm, leather-jackets and similar pests. Other types, designed for lawns, not only nourish the grass but also act as selective weed-killers. Gone, indeed, are the days when weeding a lawn meant spending back-breaking hours. A single spraying with chemicals will now rid a lawn of plantains, dandelions and that formidable enemy, the daisy, in three or four weeks.

Selective weed-killers have the greatest effect when weeds and grass are growing rapidly, so it is usually advisable to spread about one ounce of organic fertilizer per square yard three weeks before using them. Make sure, though, that the killer is applied evenly, according to the maker's instructions, otherwise patches of grass may be scorched brown. Afterwards, clean out the containers with warm, soapy water. Many modern killers contain the chemical hormone 4-50, which stimulates weeds until they grow themselves to death. If only a small amount accidentally gets on to plants like tomatoes it will soon produce deformities.

Vegetable-growing is another aspect of gardening which can be made much easier by careful planning. A plot eight feet by twelve feet can provide a copious supply of vegetables with a

—this way

like drinking from a full jam jar, which does not need fixing. Alternatively, cut a hole in the table to fit a small dessert plate or a jar for containing water.

Paint only the surfaces which the birds will not touch. Leave the rest plain wood. Birds like bread, cake, biscuit, crumbs, cheese, bacon rind, nuts, currants, sultanas, meaty bones and fat. A piece of coconut in its shell suspended by a string will amuse Blue Tits.

GARDEN SEAT

YEARS of hard wear can be had from a garden bench seat made from 4 ft. of 1-in. planking, 9 in. or 10 in. wide, and two straight natural logs, each about 6 in. in diameter and 30 in. long. Any type of wood will do. The plank, ready planed, will cost about 6s.

Choose a sheltered position with a tree or some other solid object as a back rest, preferably near a path to provide dry standing. With their top ends sawn level, set the legs—well

creosoted as a protection against rot—into holes dug 1 ft. deep. They should be 1 ft. away from the back rest and 2 ft. 4 in. apart. Ram the earth round them and they will then provide a firm support for the seat.

Place the plank across them so that it overlaps each log by 4 in., and fix it in position with a 6-in. nail at each end. The precaution of drilling holes for the nails will prevent the nails from splitting the plank. Creosoting the plank will preserve it and make it match with the logs.

ROSE ARCH

BUILD a rose arch to the inner dimensions of an ordinary house doorway: about 7 ft. high by 3 ft. wide. The simplest arch consists of two whitewood uprights—each 4 in. wide, 2 in. thick and 9 ft. long

—set 2 ft. into the ground with a 4 ft. crossbar nailed across their tops.

Ram the earth well round the uprights. An 18 in. strut nailed across each upper corner will keep the arch steady. The total cost of the wood should not exceed 25s.

If "rustic" round wood is being used the bark should be removed. The crosspiece will need to be trimmed flat where the sawn ends of the uprights butt on to it.

Creosote the wood to preserve it before putting it up. Holes bored before nailing with 4 in. or 6 in. nails will avoid splitting the wood.

An alternative design is to join the uprights with a half-circle of strip metal 5 ft. long. Iron 1 in. by ¼ in. costs about 3d. per ft. from ironmongers. Drill two holes at each end to take round-headed 1½ in. wood screws to fix the iron to the uprights. Two coats of ordinary bicycle enamel will preserve the iron.

A series of arches, joined horizontally at the tops of the uprights, makes a pergola, or covered walk.

A rambler rose can be trained up each upright.

GARDEN WITH A CAREFREE TOUCH

MOST houses are set on the long strips of land favoured by surveyors—and the easiest way to get the best out of a garden of this shape is to design it on paper.

In the illustrations on the left, both the front and back plots have been made as easy as possible to maintain. With a small front garden, a lawn is more trouble than it is worth. Paving (1) is easier to maintain, and polyantha (2) and standard (3) roses give all the colour that is required.

The back garden has been planned with sweeping informal lines to camouflage the cold, straight edges of the boundary. The lawn (4) is irregular and is bordered with flat stones (5), set level with the turf, to reduce edge-trimming work. The hard-worn stretch of lawn between the garage and the terrace is set with paving stones (6), and the terrace itself (7)—useful for outdoor meals in summer—is bordered with lavender (8) and a square bed of perennial flowers (9).

Tall shrubs (10), both flowering and evergreen, break the fence line, and climbers (11) can be grown up the fence elsewhere. Two ornamental trees (12), one of them perhaps a weeping willow, give a vertical interest, and a paved area with a seat (13) provides a vantage point from which the garden can be admired. There is a sandpit (14) for children, tucked away to one side.

The "working" part of the garden is a small orchard (15) set in rough grass planted with bulbs. This area could be used for vegetables instead. It is screened from the house and the pleasure garden by low shrubs (16).

Any existing garden of similar shape can be adapted to this plan. A start could be made with the lawn and the ornamental trees, which take some time to grow to a useful height. From there, the change could be made piecemeal as the season allowed.

BEAUTY TREATMENT FOR A LAWN

LAWNS are focal points of gardens that can be sources of pride or causes of despair, but they can be easily maintained in perfect condition.

If the grass is thin, improve it with a light dressing of sifted soil and grass seed, allowing 1 lb. of seed to a large pan of soil. Spread and brush the mixture into the turf when rain is expected. Bare patches should be forked lightly, sown with fresh seed at a rate of 2 oz. per sq. yd. and covered with ¼ in. of fine soil. Roll and water well.

Small bumps and hollows can be quickly discovered by setting a plank, 6-8 ft. long, on edge. Mark them with small wooden pegs. Hollows can be filled with soil and seed; bumps which defy the roller should have the turf cut and rolled back, some soil removed and the turf replaced.

Destroy worms with the ready made worm-killers which are for sale, and use similar chemical aid for killing weeds. Branded lawn fertilizers are numerous. Ashes from a domestic fire, sieved, spread thinly and rolled in, will rejuvenate a lawn on heavy clay soil. A light sprinkling of wood ash improves all lawns.

Prepare your lawn for the winter by raking out moss and dead grass. Also, aerate the soil and help to drain it by sticking the prongs of an ordinary garden fork into the turf, studding the lawn with small holes about 3 in. apart and 6 in. deep.

row each of carrots, beet, peas, Brussels sprouts, cabbage Savoy and broccoli. In a large garden, a plot forty feet by thirty feet is ample for keeping an average household in fresh vegetables for a year. I suggest five fifteen-foot rows of carrots, three of parsnips, four of beet, two of cabbage Savoys, three of sprouts, one each of celery, cabbage, cauliflower, shallots, dwarf beans and broccoli, five of onions, three of peas, two of broad beans and two of runner beans.

Prominent among the varieties which grow willingly and rapidly are *Early Horn* carrots, *Scarlet Globe* and *Red Globe* beetroots, *Exhibition* brussel sprouts, *Ormskirk* Savoys and *Purple Sprouting* broccoli.

Dwarf peas such as *Little Marvel, Peter Pan* and *Kelvedon Wonder* help the gardener by cropping well without supports. The important thing is to sow the seeds thinly. I find it best to make a trench the width of the spade and 1½ in. deep and space the seeds along it in three rows 2½ in. apart allowing the same distance between each seed.

Lettuce seed—a pinch of it at fortnightly intervals—can be sown between rows of peas which are eighteen inches or more apart. It is not perhaps generally realized that such varieties of lettuce as *Imperial* are perfectly hardy and will stand through the winter unprotected, producing hearty crops from April to June. The seed of this variety should be sown in September-October, and the young seedlings planted out nine inches apart as soon as they are large enough to be handled.

For success with winter vegetables, it is vital that the plants reach a state of maturity before the colder weather sets in. *Savoys* should be planted in their permanent quarters before the middle of June, and sprouting broccoli before the end of July. Really firm soil is best. I have many times planted them with a crowbar—and enjoyed fine crops.

Sea-kale, chicory and endive are out-of-the-ordinary vegetables which well repay the necessity of being put into trays and blanched in darkness. They can, in addition, be forced in the open, like rhubarb, by being covered with an upturned length of drainpipe, topped with a slate, or with an ordinary weatherproof box.

Glass cloches can be valuable aids to producing early and large crops of vegetables on small plots of land, provided the soil is kept well nourished. For example, a row of small cloches can protect lettuces from September until March, and then be moved to an adjoining row for early strawberries.

In May, when the strawberries are advanced and the lettuce crop has been cleared, the cloches go back to the first row to cover tomatoes. In September, when lettuces have been sown in place of the strawberries, the cloches are transferred to the second row—and so on.

Cloches, which can also of course help to raise seedlings, cuttings and the more tender summer crops like cucumbers, egg plants and melons, are perhaps the limit of the equipment which the average gardener needs. The other essentials are spade, fork, hoe, rake, trowel, shears, secateurs, mower and a measuring rod and line.

HAVE YOU A GARDENING HINT?

Next week, Percy Thrower will introduce a new feature in JOHN BULL, entitled *Your Garden And Mine*, in which he reveals some of the secrets of his own gardening success. Then, beginning with the issue of April 28, he will each week choose a hint sent in by a reader and add comments drawn from his own experience. JOHN BULL will pay five guineas for each published hint.

Send your practical, topical and *original* gardening hint to Percy Thrower, Your Garden And Mine, JOHN BULL, 189 High Holborn, London, W.C.1. Entries cannot be returned unless a stamped, self-addressed envelope is enclosed.

BETTER CROPS AT-A-GLANCE

VEGETABLES FROM SEED THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

SUMMER CROPS

VEGETABLE	SOW	EASY VARIETIES	SOW PER 50 FT. ROW	CARE
BROAD BEANS	Feb.-Apr.	Leviathan, Homestead	1 pint	Stagger seeds in double row 4 in. apart. Spray plants against black fly
DWARF BEANS	Apr.-July	Canadian wonder, Pershorefavourite	½ pint	Thin seedlings 9 in. apart. Apply liquid manure as flowers fade. Pick green for summer use
RUNNER BEANS	May	Streamline	½ pint	Grow on bean poles or twine. Apply liberal top dressings of compost or manure in dry weather. Spray with water night and morning
CAPSICUM (sweet peppers)	Feb.-Mar.	Mixed edible	¼ oz.	Grow under glass. When seedlings are 3-4 in. high pot in 5-in. pots
CARROTS	Feb.-Apr.	Early market, Red elephant	1 oz.	Do not sow if soil is very wet. Thin seedlings 6-8 in. apart
HAMBURG PARSLEY	Apr.	—	¼ oz.	Cultivate as carrots. Use tops as parsley and cook roots, or grate them raw for salads
KOHL RABI	Apr.-July	Early white	¼ oz.	Thin seedlings 1 ft. apart when large enough. Use 2 months after
PEAS	Feb.-Apr.	Kelvedon wonder, Early onward	1½ pints	Have well-manured soil. Press in twiggy sticks for support after sowing 3 in. apart
ONIONS	Jan.-Mar.	Ailsa Craig	1 oz.	Have rich, well-worked soil. Thin or transplant seedlings 8 in. apart
SUMMER SPINACH	Feb.-June	Goliath	1 oz.	Thin seedlings 6 in. apart. Need plenty of water
TURNIP	Feb.-Mar.	Early snowball	¼ oz.	Thin seedlings 8 in. apart. Apply liquid manure when 3 in. high

AUTUMN CROPS

BROCCOLI	Apr.	Veitch's self-protecting	¼ oz.	Have soil manured and limed. Transplant at third leaf 2 ft. apart. Top dress 2-3 weeks later with Nat. Growmore fertilizer
CABBAGE	Mar.	Greyhound, Winnigstadt	¼ oz.	Feed with nitrogenous fertilizer 3 weeks after planting out seedlings 2 ft. apart in May
CARROTS	Mid-July	—	—	As for summer crop
CAULIFLOWER	Apr.	Autumn giant	¼ oz.	Thin to leave mature plants 2 ft. apart. Top dress with fertilizer when curds begin to form
ONIONS	Apr.-May	—	—	As for summer crops
TURNIPS (main crop)	June-July	Green top stone, Orange jelly	¼ oz.	Have well-manured, well-drained soil. Thin seedlings 8 in. apart as soon as possible after sowing
RUNNER BEANS	June	—	—	As for summer crop

WINTER AND SPRING CROPS

BEET	Apr.-May	Crimson ball, Intermediate	1 oz.	Thin seedlings 9 in. apart. Apply artificial fertilizer every 3 weeks. Harvest before frost
BORECOLE (kale)	Mar.	Cottager's kale, Curled kale	¼ oz.	Plant seedlings 2 ft. apart. Top dress with nitro fertilizer in warm weather
SPROUTING BROCCOLI	Apr.	Sandringham winter white, Mammoth spring white	¼ oz.	Transplant seedlings 2 ft. apart in July. Feed with Nat. Growmore except in dormant season
BRUSSELS SPROUTS	Apr.	Goliath, Holborn exhibition	¼ oz.	Transplant seedlings 3 ft. apart in June. Cut lowest sprouts first. Leave a small stump at each cut
CABBAGE	July-Aug.	Christmas drumhead, January king, Savoy	¼ oz.	Transplant seedlings 18 in. apart. Apply liquid manure or sulphate of ammonia every 3 weeks during active growth
CARROTS	July	—	—	As for autumn crops
CELERIAC	Mar. (in heat)	Turnip-rooted	¼ oz.	Pot seedlings in 3 in. pots. In May plant outdoors 2½ ft. apart. Cultivate as celery
CELERY	Mar. (in heat)	Golden self-blanching, Giant white, Giant pink	¼ oz.	Transplant seedlings 10 in. apart in well-manured 1-ft. trenches in July. Water liberally
LEEKS	Feb.-Mar.	Holborn model	¼ oz.	Transplant seedlings 9 in. apart in 12 in. holes when as thick knitting needles. Nitrate of soda helps
PARSNIPS	Feb.-Mar.	Maltese	¼ oz.	Thin seedlings 8 in. apart as soon as possible. Hoe frequently in summer

EASY SALADS

VEGETABLE	SEED REQUIRED	CARE	WEEKS TO MATURITY
CHICORY	¼ oz. per 50 ft. row	Sow in April. Thin seedlings 1 ft. apart as soon as possible. Lift in November and replant in boxes under glass. Keep warm and quite dark	4 after lifting
CORN SALAD	¼ oz. per 50 ft. row	Sow March-September. Thin seedlings 8 in. apart. Apply nitrate of soda in growing season	10-12
RIDGE CUCUMBER	3 seeds per pot	Sow in February in heat. Plant out seedlings in late May. Remove male flowers—they have stamens—apply soot water (¼ lb. to 2 gallons of water) and general fertilizer	24
ENDIVE	¼ oz. per 50 ft. row	Sow in drills June-August. Thin out seedlings 9 in. apart. Blanch by covering each plant with an inverted pot and a tile, or lift to a cold frame and exclude light with sacks	12
LETTUCE	¼ oz. per 50 ft. row	Sow all spring and summer. Thin seedlings 10 in. apart. Feed with nitrate of soda when plants are growing well	10
RADISH	¼ oz. per 50 ft. row	Sow all spring and summer. Apply Nat. Growmore—1 oz. per sq. yd.—a week before sowing. Thin seedlings to 3 in. apart each way	6
CRESS AND MUSTARD	½-1 oz. per ordinary seed box	Sow thickly on top of soil and cover with paper. Keep damp until after germination. Then take off paper and water well	2-4 (Cress takes a week longer)

SOIL AND FERTILIZER CHART

HEAVY SOIL (CLAY)

FERTILIZER	AMOUNT PER SQ. YD. (UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED)	TIME TO APPLY	CROPS SPECIALLY BENEFITED
BASIC SLAG	8 oz.	Autumn	Fruits
GRIT OR COARSE SAND	2 in. dressing before digging	Winter	All crops
HYDRATED LIME	4-8 oz.	Winter	Vegetables
NITRATE OF SODA	¼ oz.	Summer	Leaf crops
NITRO-CHALK	1 oz.	Summer	Brassicas
SULPHATE OF AMMONIA	1 oz.	Summer	Leaf crops
SULPHATE OF POTASH	1 oz.	Spring	Potatoes, root crops, tomatoes

MEDIUM AND LIGHT SOIL (GRAVEL OR SAND)

BONEMEAL	3 oz.	Autumn	New lawns, fruits, flowers
CHALK	4-8 oz.	3 weeks before sowing	All crops except lime-haters
COW AND PIG MANURE	3 large barrows per sq. rod	Spring	All crops
DRIED BLOOD	3 oz.	Summer	Flowers, vegetables
NITRATE OF SODA	¼ oz.	Summer	Leaf crops
SOOT	Surface dust to darken soil	Summer	Young plants. Plants attacked by leaf miners
SULPHATE OF POTASH	1 oz.	Early summer	Asparagus, carrots, cauliflower, onions, potatoes
SUPERPHOSPHATE OF LIME	2-3 oz.	Autumn (medium soil); spring (light soil)	Seed beds and flowers generally

CHALKY SOIL

HOP MANURE	1 lb.	Before sowing	All crops
SULPHATE OF AMMONIA	1 oz.	Summer	Brassicas

INSECT FOES

INSECT	DESCRIPTION	ATTACKS	CONTROL
APHIS	Clusters of tiny green, grey or black flies on tender parts of plants	All flowers, fruit, vegetables	Liquid derris in summer. Tar oil sprays fruit in winter
CABBAGE FLY	Just over ¼ in. wingspread	Roots	Gamma dust
CARROT FLY	Small, whitish, legless grubs	Roots	Naphthalene or gamma dust
CATERPILLAR	Many kinds and colours	Leafy plant growth	D.D.T. dust, liquid derris, nicotine dust or liquid
CELERY FLY	¼ in. long. Brown	Celery leaves, causing decay	Spray with derris wash or dust with soot and lime mixture
FLEA BEETLE	Longitudinal yellow stripes on black. Sometimes black all over	Seed leaves on brassicas	Flea beetle dust
RED SPIDER	Tiny and yellow (occasionally red) clustering on undersides of foliage, sucking juices	Greenhouse and garden plants, fruit, etc.	D.N.C. washes for orchards. Spray plants under glass with water. Burn straw from beds
WIREWORM	Thin, yellow, wiry. ¼ in. long	Roots	Wireworm dust
MARCH AND WINTER MOTHS	When grubs, they raise the middles of their bodies as they crawl	Fruit trees	Grease bands. Lead arsenate spray in bad attacks
ONION FLY	About ¼ in. long. Grey	Onion bulbs when forming	Dust bases of seedlings with Gamma dust

INSECT FRIENDS

Hover Fly resembles a wasp, but smaller and striped in blue and white. Found hovering near plants, especially roses. Preys on green-fly

Ladybird is usually small red beetle with black spots, though patterns vary. Often found on plants with greenfly, which it attacks and eats.

Tiger Beetle is green, about ½ in. long, and very active. Usually found when digging. Eats several soil insects which are harmful to plants

Centipede eats many soil insects which harm plants. Has a flat, bright brown body, long antennae. Moves quickly. Found when digging

Devil's Coach Horse Beetle also eats harmful soil insects. Moves quickly and rears head and tail. Found when digging, and in the greenhouse

Ichneumon Fly has a slender waist and vibrating antennae. Found on plants near caterpillers. Attacks them and lays eggs inside them

Ground Beetle is about ¾ in. long. Slender, brown above and white below. Feeds on small soil animals. Found when digging, and moves quickly

Glow worm is a small beetle, difficult to see in daytime, but female is visible as a faint moving light on ground at night. Feeds on slugs

Lacewing Fly has long, filmy wings and large eyes with coppery sheen. Ammonia-like odour. Hovers above plants. Preys on green-fly

THE PRIVATE WAR

It was Farmer Beddoes against the United States Air Force. His daughter was fighting on both sides

by ***EDMUND COOPER***

ILLUSTRATED BY ZELINSKI

ONE day in June, when it was just about as warm as England can make it, Mr. Henry Beddoes, a mild-mannered, middle-aged farmer, declared war on the United States of America. It was not the heat, however, that had turned Henry Beddoes into a fighting man. That morning, fifteen of his Rhode Island Reds had been savaged by a large, long-toothed dog. It was an American dog.

The obvious solution had been a shotgun. Without hesitation Mr. Beddoes had fired both barrels, unhappily executing another Rhode Island Red while leaving the killer untouched.

The dog was able to take a hint, and rapidly crossed the border to the safety of American territory. It appeared to know when it was out of range, since it turned round before it reached the airfield runway and barked its head off.

Mr. Beddoes snorted wrathfully and danced about a little. Finally, he forced himself to go in to breakfast.

During the meal, he addressed an eloquent harangue to his nineteen-year-old daughter.

"Lynette," Mr. Beddoes said with ominous calm, "never again let me see you with an American. I don't like them. I don't like the way they talk, the way they work, the way they think. I don't like their cars, their clothes, or their camaraderie, and, above all, I don't like their dogs. So never, on any account, get yourself entangled with one of those overfed, underdeveloped products of rebellious colonialism."

Lynette, blonde and self-possessed, knew all about the Declaration of Independence. She had been thinking of making one herself. She was also considering a personal Anglo-American security pact which had been suggested by one Master Sergeant James Lee Stuart.

So, with brilliant feminine mistiming, she began the softening-up process.

"If the Americans didn't have the airfield, it would be the R.A.F.," she said reasonably. "You should see what the R.A.F. have done over at Whitewater."

"All right," retorted Mr. Beddoes with sarcasm. "But if we've got to have planes that howl like dying pigs, let's have 'em flown by our own boys."

"I have news for you," said Lynette gently. "There are Americans who share the same views. They think we ought to do our own dirty work. They would like to go home."

"I'll be damned!" said Mr. Beddoes, being unable to discover a satisfactory answer. He maintained a moody silence until at last, having drunk the teapot dry, he went out to pitch hay, with the June sun beaming its increasing torment down through a cloudless sky.

The trouble had really begun six months before, one grey January morning when Mr. Beddoes went out to survey his seventy acres. He knew, of course, that the Air Ministry had taken over the adjacent heathland. What he did not know was that the Air Ministry had presented it to the U.S. Air Force.

He saw, less than a quarter of a mile from his farmhouse, a tiny colony of huts. He saw also a convoy of trucks that began to disgorge a small army of men in bulky, fur-lined jackets and caps with enormous peaks.

"Americans!" murmured Mr. Beddoes, in the tone of one who has seen the horrible shape of things to come.

During the weeks that followed the colony grew with unprecedented speed. At all hours of the day and night tractors, bulldozers, excavators rumbled their dismal prophecy over the hitherto quiet landscape.

Then, not content with merely desecrating the countryside, the infernal Americans had the nerve to ask if they might use Mr. Beddoes's private road while the airfield was under construction.

Naturally, he said no; but when they contracted to provide a new concrete surface, Mr. Beddoes weakened. Finally, he agreed—and pretended to look the other way during the two days it took for the road to be surfaced.

It made him feel a little more kindly towards the invaders; but all good feelings evaporated as soon as the traffic began. Five-ton trucks would rumble past the farmhouse incessantly, until the crockery danced on the shelf, the windows vibrated, and it seemed as if the whole place must drop to bits.

It didn't. But a hundred hens stopped laying for a couple of weeks in protest.

At the village tavern one evening, Mr. Beddoes disburdened himself of a conviction too heavy for a man to bear alone. It was the evening before the hens were killed. It was the eve of war.

"England," announced Mr. Beddoes, as he reached sadly for his tankard, "is finished!" Unconscious of an historic destiny, he stared moodily into his beer, wondering just at what point in the scheme of things Britain had ceased to be Great. "Finished!" he repeated with tragic emphasis. "Knocked out by a bunch of renegade colonists!"

He was able to announce this sad fact with authority, for that very afternoon he had received confirmation. Nine American aircraft, the first of many, had landed at the airfield. The noise of their jets had put Mr. Beddoes's teeth on edge and sounded off a mournful carillon of funeral bells in his tired brain.

The landlord took Mr. Beddoes's verdict calmly. "America," he said wisely, "is a young nation."

"Young!" spat Mr. Beddoes contemptuously. "They're

Lynette looked up ruefully. "I was hoping to bring you and Daddy together. Now everything's spoiled"

young all right, and they're big. They've grown everything big—even heads."

"They're building an empire," continued the landlord sagely. "They're pioneering new frontiers."

Mr. Beddoes snorted. "What do they think I am—a perishing redskin?"

This rhetorical question seemed to be the signal for a general agreement, which involved the frequent replenishing of many tankards, and successfully lasted until closing time without reaching any conclusion at all.

THERE is for every man a breaking point. Mr. Beddoes arrived at his next morning when he missed the dog and killed yet another hen.

The declaration of war was not actually carried into effect until midday. It was then brought officially to the notice of the United States of America through the person of Private First-class Ray Honneger, who was unlucky enough to stroll down Mr. Beddoes's concrete road on his way to the village.

"Hi, Pop, how's tricks?" called Private Honneger as he sauntered past the hayfield.

Mr. Beddoes, pitchfork in hand, approached the unsuspecting symbol of American aggression. "Go back," he said firmly. "This is a private road."

Honneger looked startled. "Have a heart, Pop! It's another coupla miles if I have to go back."

"Your government pays for your shoe leather," retorted Mr. Beddoes, "and the exercise will do you good. About turn! Quick march!"

"What's gotten into you?" complained Honneger. "The boys have always used your road. Besides, we laid it, didn't we?"

"You laid it so that you could bring trucks through and unload them quickly; but the airfield is completed now. As from today, I use my road, my man uses my road, and my daughter uses my road. But no Americans use it. Good morning!"

"Aw, Pop——" began Honneger.

"Young man," said Mr. Beddoes, "I shall be happy to prove that I was never acquainted with your mother. Kindly do not call me Pop."

"Nuts!" said Honneger angrily, and turned on his heels.

"Furthermore," called Mr. Beddoes, "tell your C.O. that a representative of the Law will shortly call on him to inquire about the ownership of a certain dog, an American dog—mad, needless to say!"

Private First-class Honneger made a rude noise.

Lynette observed the whole scene from the kitchen window. Her father, she decided, was being perfectly ridiculous. And when he came in to lunch, she took the trouble to tell him so.

"An Englishman's home is his castle," replied Mr. Beddoes, as if this noble sentiment was a *carte blanche* for everything. He gave his attention to the plate before him, fiercely attacking his sausages.

After lunch, instead of spending half an hour with the morning papers, he immediately went out into the farmyard, having muttered something to Lynette about fixing the leaky oil heater of the brooder he was using in the barn. But it wasn't the sort of job that held top priority in a state of war. And Mr. Beddoes had used it merely as an excuse to go out on patrol.

His vigilance was justified, for the enemy was about to renew its attempted breakthrough. Three large uniformed men were crossing the runway and walking towards Mr. Beddoes's private road.

Casually, Mr. Beddoes went back to the house for his shot-gun.

"Leave that gun here!" commanded Lynette, jumping to melodramatic conclusions.

"I shall merely display my strength," said Mr. Beddoes. "It isn't even loaded."

Lynette watched the meeting through the window. There was much waving of arms and much raising of voices. But presently, the three men turned round and went back across the airfield. Mr. Beddoes returned to the farmhouse, wearing a satisfied smile.

That evening, while Mr. Beddoes recounted his exploits at the village tavern, Lynette strolled along a certain picturesque lane bordering the airfield. Usually, Master Sergeant Stuart would be exercising his dog Hobo while he waited for her.

But as Lynette approached the agreed rendezvous, she saw that Sergeant Stuart was alone. A certain vague suspicion suddenly became a horrible certainty; and romance took second place.

"Where's Hobo?" she asked abruptly.

"Sick," came the laconic reply.

"On chicken feathers?"

"Could be," said the sergeant calmly. "He was out all night. . . . Why the panic, darling?" He grinned. "Has old Ironside suffered the loss of a feathered friend?"

"Fifteen!" said Lynette grimly.

"Holy smoke! No wonder he's steamed up! They were talking about it when I came off duty. I got the impression the old boy was all set for a scalping party."

"If he is, it's your fault, Jimmy Stuart." Her voice was cold. The strain of coping all day with a mildly homicidal father was beginning to tell.

"My fault?" exploded Sergeant Stuart. "Who said Hobo was guilty, anyway?"

"You did. You just admitted it."

"I did not. I said he was sick."

"On chicken feathers," flashed Lynette. Her lip trembled, and she added miserably: "I was hoping to bring you and Daddy together this weekend, but now everything's spoiled. It'll be ages before he simmers down. At the moment, the sight of an American uniform is enough to make him pick up the shotgun."

"Hell, anyone would think he'd collected a sore head at the Boston Tea Party. . . . This country seems to be full of crazy farmers. There's another one over at——"

"If you need to justi yourself by insulting my father," interrupted Lynette icily, "I'd better leave you to do it alone."

It was the signal for a lovers' quarrel, which was maintained at total war strength for a full ninety seconds before Sergeant Stuart, seeing Lynette was on the verge of tears, made the first peace move.

"Darling, I've made you unhappy. I'm a heel. I don't deserve you."

"Don't say that," sniffed Lynette. "It was my fault, really. I felt all tied up inside."

"I love you," he whispered, encircling her waist. "I'll love you till the moon's too old to shine."

"I love you, too, Jimmy."

WHEN he returned home from the inn half an hour after closing time, Mr. Beddoes was still basking in the glow of acknowledged heroism. After supper, during which he and Lynette exchanged barely a dozen words, he went straight up to bed, determined to get a good night's rest, for who could say what the morrow would bring?

As he undressed, he gave a deep sigh of satisfaction. The day had not been without its crises, but England had stood firm.

England, however, was not destined for a quiet night. It was approaching one o'clock when, fighting his way reluctantly up to the surface of consciousness, Mr. Beddoes heard a loud, unmelodious barking. There was also much squawking. Not unnaturally Mr. Beddoes jumped to the conclusion that another mass murder was in progress.

"Thieving Yankee hound!" he bellowed. "Where the devil's that shotgun?"

But when he glanced through the bedroom window, he was confronted with a more urgent

"Jimmy!" cried Lynette. "Come back! Come

problem. Across the farmyard, a yellow tongue of flame licked happily at the barn door.

By the time Mr. Beddoes had fallen halfway downstairs as a result of neglecting to tie his shoe-laces, Lynette had already phoned the fire brigade. Unfortunately, the nearest was thirteen miles away.

Together, they dashed into the yard, where the dog Hobo was barking at the conflagration excitedly. But Mr. Beddoes was no longer in the mood for vengeance. "That blasted brooder!" he gasped. "It's oil heater is still leaking. That's what started it. I should have fixed it this afternoon!"

"You were too busy manning the barricades," panted Lynette. She was seeking futilely for buckets while Mr. Beddoes frantically tried to fix a large piece of rubber hose on to a very small tap.

Then the devil was let loose. Somewhere, out

back!" But the seven-foot Martian in the space-suit walked suicidally towards the sea of flames

in the darkness, a low banshee moan gathered slowly to a high-pitched wail.

"Night exercise!" snorted Mr. Beddoes. "Trust the damned Yankees to pick a time like this. They're——"

But he got no further, being forced to dive out of the way of what seemed to be a monster tank careering through the farmyard. It rocked to a screaming standstill, disgorging a seven-foot Martian in a neat white space-suit. He waved cheerily to Lynette, and walked suicidally towards the blazing barn.

Lynette realized who it was.

"Jimmy!" she cried. "Come back! Come back!" But the figure marched on and was soon enveloped in a sea of hungry flames.

"Outa the way, Pop!" bawled somebody with a familiar accent. "This is men's work!"

Mr. Beddoes ducked under a fat uncoiling snake that began to spit ice-cream. At the same time, the seven-foot Martian abruptly reappeared. He grabbed the end of the snake, then calmly went back into the inferno, spraying all around him a smothering white foam.

The flames became discouraged. In less than two minutes, they had completely expired.

Somebody worked a searchlight, and Mr. Beddoes was able to explore the smoky interior of his barn. The walls and beams were charred, about sixty bales of straw had gone up, and the brooder, together with its hundred chicks, was a pile of ashes. But, incredibly, that was all the damage.

A voice spoke in the darkness: "Well, that's it. Guess we'd better quit trespassin', boys, before this hill-billy here reaches for his shotgun."

Mr. Beddoes peered at a group of vaguely human shapes.

He took a deep breath. "Gentlemen," he said, "the war is over. Let there be peace with honour!"

"What war, Pop?"

"Me," said Mr. Beddoes, "versus the United States."

"The guy's screwy!" This verdict was delivered with unshakeable conviction by Private First-class Honneger.

At that moment, having survived his ordeal by roasting, a tall asbestos-clad figure took off his headpiece.

"Before we bury the tomahawk," said Sergeant Stuart gently, "there's the small detail of some chickens which my hound chewed up a little. What's the damage?"

"It's on the house," said Mr. Beddoes nobly. "Think no more of it." He regarded the shadowy figures around him. "I wonder if you would kindly accept my hospitality, gentlemen? There is, I believe, a cask of cider in my cellar, and beer, of course, British beer!"

A chorus of enthusiastic replies greeted this inspired suggestion. Then, as Lynette and Sergeant Stuart quietly withdrew, Mr. Beddoes led the rest of the firefighters up to the farmhouse.

"Jimmy," said Lynette, when they were alone, "you were wonderful. But, for one horrible moment, I thought you were going to be fried."

"It was nothing," said Sergeant Stuart modestly. "Nothing at all. Haven't I already told you I'd go through fire for you?"

Suddenly a dark shape brushed against the sergeant's legs. There was a sound halfway between a yawn and a wistful sigh. Then Hobo wagged his tail indolently, and flopped.

"Now how did he get here?" asked the sergeant.

"I don't know—but he certainly warned us about the fire," Lynette said. "I phoned the fire brigade. Though it doesn't seem to have come," she added lamely.

MEANWHILE, at the farmhouse, English cider was beginning to quench a profound Anglo-American thirst. Then suddenly the farmyard was a grinding, clanging symphony of noise. Everyone crowded to the open window. They saw, against the background of a single searchlight beam, an antique vehicle, a revelation in crimson and brass. Something moved. It was an axe attached to an arm, attached to a body wearing an eager, helmeted face.

"Where's the fire?" it inquired hopefully.

A tall American gazed down with mournful affection. "There is," he drawled in tones of reverence, "no place like England."

The British fireman considered this verdict thoughtfully. Then Mr. Beddoes did his best to explain. Presently, more tankards were required.

Gazing at, it seemed, a multitude of cider-drinking firefighters, Mr. Beddoes drew consolation from the belief that life could hold no more surprises for him. But he was wrong. Before he could attempt to defend himself, his hand was taken in a grip of iron and shaken vigorously. Feeling slightly light-headed, he began to wonder why anyone should want to torture him so early in the morning.

"Daddy," said Lynette, in a voice that seemed very distant, "this is my fiancé!"

"I'm really glad to know you, sir," said Sergeant Stuart. "I come from farming people myself. Maybe you'd let me give you a hand round about harvest?"

Mr. Beddoes looked from his daughter to the young man at her side. For one sweet moment he thought of the shotgun, and of the choice flow of words to be used on this impudent Yankee.

Then he saw the eloquent pleading in Lynette's eyes. And the shotgun faded.

Mr. Beddoes cleared his throat, and made the supreme sacrifice.

"Glad to have you," he said. "The corn is pretty thick this year!" THE END

Working the main sail in a high wind takes all of Denning's fifteen stone. He usually carries a man of eighteen stone as ballast

Sailors on wheels

When gales blow, Richard Denning and his crew go yachting on dry land and brave every hazard but drowning

by JACK ATACK

ON the hard-packed beach at St. Anne's-on-the-Sea, on a wild September day two years ago, Richard Millett Denning pushed his wheeled sand yacht off for the day's first run. He jumped in as the yacht, picking up speed, scudded towards the marker post.

Denning swung the tiller, but as the yacht turned, its large sail was caught by a powerful gust of wind and the boom swung viciously across the deck. The jolt catapulted Denning out of the yacht into a sand bank twenty feet away. With both wrists sprained and his chest badly bruised, he finished the run. "Sand yachting," he says, "takes nerve and endurance, qualities which a yachtsman must never lose."

Sand yachting, comparatively new in Britain, is known to enthusiasts as "the sport of giants" because of the physical punishment and mental fatigue involved. At St. Anne's—the British mecca for sand yachting—members of the Fylde International Sand Yacht Club have an ideal six-mile stretch of windswept beach and a measured "flying mile" where accurate speed records can be set up.

The hazards of the sport affect the yacht as well as the crew. Denning was skimming along Brancaster beach in Norfolk two years ago when his ballast man, who was also acting as the look-out, spotted a deep rivulet in the sand ahead. Only thirty feet from it, Denning had to swing the tiller abruptly for a whiplash turn. The yacht veered sharply into the wind, but the shock was so great that both front wheels collapsed.

Denning, a forty-nine year old structural engineer, is Britain's leading sand yachtsman, and has designed and built five yachts of different types.

In his present yacht, Coronation Year Mark II, the largest and most expensive sand yacht ever built, he has reached a maximum speed of sixty-two miles an hour and an average speed of 45.45 miles an hour, faster than any known record over a measured mile.

Built in Denning's private workshop in Somerset, Coronation Year Mark II is triangular, with two wheels close together at the back and two wheels at either side of the front, a twenty-foot mast, and 372 square feet of canvas sail. It cost more than £1,000, weighs twelve hundredweight, and rides twelve inches off the sand. The yacht is built for storm conditions in which Denning can get the maximum amount of wind. To minimize shocks as the yacht travels over sand banks, ripples and rough patches at high speed, Denning has sprung each wheel and uses sponge-rubber cushions as seats.

To operate the large-sailed vehicles in heavy winds requires brute force. Denning, who works the main sail or the tiller in his crew, weighs fifteen stone. For ballast he sometimes carries an eighteen-stone ex-policeman.

"In sand yachting," says Denning, "you are at the complete mercy of the wind. It can be your friend—whipping you along the beach at top speed—or your enemy."

Sand yachtsmen can maintain a high speed in a steady wind because they don't have to slow down when turning. "These yachts are the fastest turning vehicles in the world," says Denning. "They can spin round in their own length at thirty miles an hour."

When starting, the crew has to jump in quickly because of the yacht's rapid acceleration. Denning once failed to allow for this. The yacht shot along the beach, leaving him behind.

Sand yachts are built to carry from one to four crew. Because he catches the full blast of sand and spray as the yacht skims across puddles left by the outgoing tide, the helmsman, who is also the skipper, has the toughest job. In these conditions he may have to breathe like a swimmer—with his head to one side. As skipper, Denning once had his eye closed by flying sand and had to finish his run half-blinded.

Besides blasts from puddles, yachtsmen may catch the spray that the wind whips in from the sea. For protection they usually wear thick goggles, waterproof jackets, warm gloves and crash helmets. "The rugged conditions are all part of the sport," says Denning. "Skimming along the beach, you get a feeling of silent speed and complete freedom."

Besides racing against time, sand yachtsmen stage impromptu races between themselves. At St. Anne's competitors get off to a flying start and race over a two-mile course, one mile to the marker post and one mile back.

While one man was being harassed from behind, he turned too sharply at the marker post and hit it. The impact threw him against the tiller bar and his main sail operator against the base of the mast. "They were both badly shaken up," says Denning, "but, fortunately, they were wearing crash helmets."

A STOCKY, sandbeaten northerner, Denning turned to sand yachting eight years ago. Before building his first yacht, he made a miniature model, using Meccano pieces for the body and a handkerchief for the sail. "I used to let it loose on isolated roadways when no one was looking."

His first yacht was a small gaff rig—a yacht with a rhomboid sail—which he sailed on Brancaster beach in Norfolk. After the mast had corkscrewed and the front axle bowed, Denning decided that the model was too flexible. He then experimented with two Bermuda rigs—yachts with triangular sails—which were cheaper in initial cost and upkeep. "Although they were successful for pleasure cruising," says Denning, "they couldn't stand up to high winds, and I was looking for speed."

In 1951 Denning started to design a new yacht—at a cost of £325. On a gusty August day in 1953, Denning pushed the yacht, Coronation Year Mark I, on to the beach at St. Anne's. It was skimming along at fifty miles an hour when he heard a loud snap and the steering went loose in his hands. Crazily, the yacht began to snake along, out of control.

When the yacht stopped, Denning discovered that the steering cable had sheared due to metal fatigue—a bitter end to six months' work. "In sand yachting you can't just patch up a weak point," he says. "You have to design a new yacht."

Sand yachting is not a difficult sport for beginners. With a few days' training, they can learn to manage the tiller and sails, and in the

On the six-mile beach, yachts hold impromptu races, and visitors are surprised to see sails moving over land. One scornful sea yachtsman joined the club after a trial run

Coronation Year Mark II, the largest sand yacht in the world, cost more than £1,000. It can travel at sixty miles an hour

popular Bermuda flyers can achieve speeds up to fifty miles an hour. The smaller models cost about £100 to build. "Even in these you get an impression of terrific speed because you are so close to the ground," says Denning.

Although the history of sand yachting is obscure, it is believed that it was first seriously developed in France by Louis Blériot, the aviator and inventor. At La Panne in Belgium he tested one of his models and from there the sport spread to England.

To persuade councillors to give the Lytham St. Anne's club permission to operate on the beach, Denning ran a ferry service in which he carried each councillor up and down the beach. "They went away excited," he says, "and shortly afterwards we were granted a licence." Today the club includes members from every part of England.

Despite the rapid spread in popularity of the sport, some people are still bewildered by the red, orange and silver sails moving over land. One elderly woman asked Denning if he could fish from his yacht. "Others just feel that it isn't right to put a sail on a vehicle," he says. Most old sea salts tend to look askance at the sport, and whenever possible Denning tries to shatter this traditional prejudice.

Once he persuaded a disparaging sea yachtsman to accompany him on a run of the beach. The wind was high and the sand was hard-packed under a thin layer of water. As the yacht skimmed down the beach, whipped around and started back, the man became excited. At the end of the run, he was helping to operate the sail. "He joined the club a few days later," Denning says. "Now he is one of our most active members." THE END

JOHN BULL PHOTOGRAPHS BY WILLIAM KEMP

In the paddock at St. Anne's, Denning and a club member watch an engineer making repairs. On one run a sharp turn made both front wheels collapse

Crossroads of the world

Continued from page 23

—and here, it might be thought, in the person of the king, the devout sixty-six year old Mohammed Idris el-Senussi, might be found the necessary unifying element, the true catalyst of the Libyan nation. In practice, unfortunately, he could all too easily have the reverse effect.

For the king is the former Emir of Cyrenaica. His position derives from his hereditary headship of the Senussi Order, founded by his grandfather, the Grand Senussi, an Algerian mystic who built up a Moslem missionary organization among the wild bedouin tribes, basing it on a series of lodges established through the oases of Cyrenaica.

Without the Senussi leaders there would be no independent Libya today. From the moment the Italians landed in 1911, they organized the tribes for the struggle against them. Not until 1932 was resistance broken. But by then many Cyrenaicans were in exile in Egypt—and it was from these that Mohammed Idris el-Senussi formed the Libyan Arab Force that re-entered Cyrenaica with the Eighth Army.

But the Tripolitanians—some of whom fought on the Italian side—are little affected by the religious veneration the bedouins of Cyrenaica feel for their Senussi chief. To the more sophisticated, he may even appear a somewhat odd figure, "the shepherd king."

Were King Idris a national patriot leader in the normal sense such parochial reactions might be swiftly overcome. But, in the tradition of his Senussi forbears, he is a scholarly man, something of a recluse. He speaks no English and has never flown in an aeroplane. He will have no truck with such modern devices as the cinema. Just as the Grand Senussi established his seat in the uninhabited oasis of Jaghbub (where his magnificent tomb now stands), so his grandson spends much time in retirement at Tobruk. Only relatively rarely and fleetingly does he visit Tripoli.

He is a man of integrity and sound intuitive judgment who has long been a friend of Britain. He has the interests of his country at heart. But he is unworldly; he is no man of action. Notoriously, he finds decision difficult.

Yet, in the kingdom of Libya today, prime ministers, governments, officials are *his* prime ministers, *his* governments—and not only in the symbolic constitutional sense intended by Adrian Pelt.

It is, clearly, a situation not without its perils—especially since the king has no direct heir—and the Senussi family has not been free of those internal feuds and jealousies that are the curse of Arab dynasties. Thus, last year—"with the full approval and at the request of the Queen," as the official announcement put it—King Idris was persuaded in the national interest to take unto himself a second wife. He journeyed to Cairo and there married Alia Lamlum, thirty-eight year old daughter of a wealthy Egyptian family of Libyan descent.

While I was in Tripoli the news went around that the newly wedded king was about to arrive there—for the first time in eighteen months—to receive the felicitations of his people. A proclamation in Arabic, English and Italian went up on the walls of the town over the signature of Mayor Taher Caramanli. It invited people to decorate the streets and make this a great historic occasion.

Outside the gold-domed Khould Palace—which the Italians had called the Balbo Palace—a curious crowd gathered to watch the king's black Mercedes arrive. A few youths shinned up palm-trees to get a better view. In the evening there were torchlight processions, marching through the streets to the gates of the palace. The torches smoked and flamed; the white-shirted schoolchildren and youths marched and counter-marched; the gold domes of the palace gleamed; the rhythmic chants rang out—and on the distant

"It was never too cold for you to go out to the cinema until the woman next door got her fur coat"

balcony a frail white figure stirred and raised a hand.

And just for a moment, as I watched the scene, it seemed possible to believe that this strange empty desert state, this land of vast distances, this complicated bundle of governmental machinery might, after all, some day pulse with the heart-beat of a nation.

Yet the more one moved about the country, the more one was brought up against all the vast unanswered questions thrown up by this international experiment in nation-making. One day I made a journey out from Benghazi, out through the shanty town where the poor who drift into town eke out their meagre existences, out past the lagoons and their salt-pans through the arid country to the east. Rain falls fitfully here where it falls at all. Every sowing is a gamble with semi-starvation as a stake. The Cyrenaicans count their harvests not by bushels per acre, but by the number of grains returned for each one sowed.

But here and there the bleakness of the coastal strip was relieved by a few cultivated plots, perhaps a rich green square of growing maize. There would be an Arab pulling a camel down a ramp and into a trench, hauling on a rope that descended into a high mud-walled well. As the camel reached the depths of the trench, a leather bucket would appear over the wall of the well, tipping out a sparkling stream of water to dash along the irrigation channels.

As one travels eastwards, the steep escarpment of the Jebel looms nearer and nearer until the road itself turns abruptly inward and begins to climb. It climbs steeply, corkscrewing upwards in well-engineered curves: the Italians built well. Presently, it levels out to cross a wide plateau, and along both sides of the road are strung a long succession of neat white bungalows, set back and evenly spaced some hundred yards apart. They were of two standard designs with round arches above their verandas—the Roman arch which is the motif of so much Italian-Libyan colonial architecture.

The land was uncultivated. The houses seemed deserted. Their windows gaped. Then, at the side of one, we caught sight of a white Arab tent spreadeagled beside a furze bush. We walked across towards it, treading on scores of rusty and flattened petrol cans —the debris of an army—pressed into the ground. The cistern at the side was closed and locked. We looked into the house. An Arab and a child lay on the floor, sleeping on a mat. Otherwise the place was empty. Cobwebs dangled from the ceiling.

The Arab woke up and explained that the tenant of the house had gone south with his flocks. He, a relative, had been left to keep watch. It was he and his family who lived in the tent under the furze bush.

Official policy is to settle bedouin families in all these houses and holdings left by the Italian colonists when they fled before the advancing Eighth Army. But it is easier said than done. It is commonplace along this road to see horses and cattle looking out of the windows of the bungalows while their owners live alongside in tents. For these are the People of the Tents—and they have their own view of their weak-spirited kinsmen who allow themselves to be trapped in houses and towns. Their farming is a shifting scratching of the earth for crops of barley and wheat. They want only to feed their families; they are tribesmen, not peasant proprietors. "Give them seed potatoes," one disheartened agriculturist said, "and they boil them!"

A mile down the road we came to the village centre, a delightful cool-looking group of arcaded white buildings, an immense white church, a market, a granary, shops and the long high building which had served as the village hall and the offices of the Italian colony's agriculturalists and administrators.

The shops were shuttered, the market derelict. But when we went into the village hall we found in a big dilapidated room on the ground floor about fifty boys, jammed together on benches, being taken through their first faltering steps in English by a young Egyptian teacher. They were of all ages from ten to over twenty. Some of them looked a bit dazed by their mental exertions. Others suffered from the inevitable eye diseases.

Some of the youths, the Libyan principal explained, had come from distant oases several days' journey across the desert. They had left their bedouin tents and their camels and come to seek knowledge. For this was a boarding school—one of ten recently established in Libya, handling three thousand students. The idea was to try to find material fit for university education to supply Libya's all but non-existent administrative class.

A convoy of sand-coloured British army lorries rolled down the road. We followed them to Barce where the 5th Tank Regiment is stationed in an old Italian hospital. It is a pleasant small town—El Marg (the meadow) to the Arabs—where the old Turkish fort looks across the street to the big white pillared church the Italians built for their colonists.

We walked across the dusty square to the town hall where, in a room on the upper floor, the mayor and council were concerting arrangements for smartening-up the town. Certain citizens, it appeared, were becoming a trifle lax in their annual whitewashing. I was surprised to notice, still hanging on a wall, a framed architect's perspective painting of the brave new Barce the Italians had been planning —with its stadium, its *teatro*, its tree-lined avenues and so on.

"We want to finish it," said the mayor, following my glance. "Only we have no money!"

"Yes," interrupted a council member, tugging at the toga-like *barracan* over his shoulder, "it is true that we are only just beginning. But do not be deceived by our small numbers! For we work! We work!"

To travel from Benghazi to Libya's other joint capital, Tripoli, is to enter another world. Cyrenaica was a battlefield; often it still feels as if the tide of war had just passed over. Tripolitania was relatively little disturbed. With its clean white arcaded streets, its palm-lined avenues and gardens, its casino and spacious hotels, Tripoli is an attractive Mediterranean city. The Roman she-wolf, suckling Romulus and Remus, still looks out from its high column beside the old castle of the Caramanli pashas; in the modern town nearly all the shops are Italian (and most of the others are Jewish); the news-stands are packed with Italian newspapers and magazines; and at breakfast in my hotel I found on my plate that strange metal device which Italians apparently find indispensable for slicing the tops of boiled eggs.

The Italian community in Tripoli (in fact only 27,000 out of 160,000 population) elects four commissioners to the municipal council; and the *Ente per la Colonizzazione della Libia* and *Instituto Nazionale Previdenza Sociale*—the two organizations formed to finance and direct the Italian agricultural colonies —still have headquarters in the town. Not only do the Italians dominate Tripolitanian trade but they are also responsible for the bulk of the province's agricultural output and exports.

Up on the Jebel in the areas of the Italian agricultural colonies and of the Italian company concessions, the rolling sandy earth is patterned for mile after mile with olive trees and vines and almond and peach trees. Eucalyptus trees, planted for shade, are now grown tall, turning the roads into avenues. The pleasant farm houses sink into the landscape, built in groups of four together, each with its neat concreted yard and barn, domed as the house is itself. The farm's number would be painted in large black numerals on the stone gatepost. Outside there would stand the water tanker on wheels. For this is a dry farming area.

But it was not lack of rain that was worrying the Italian colonists just then. They faced a more urgent threat: a mass invasion by locusts swarming up from the Chad.

The greater part of the British Army in Libya had been thrown into the battle against the invaders; I travelled for a while with an army truck that was rushing around new supplies of poisoned bran bait. And thus I met the Urbano family who were out in the fields before breakfast, desperately laying poisoned bran around their threatened olive trees.

There were eight of them in the family—and they nearly all seemed to be on the job from the teenagers in blue shorts to the old man whose deeply lined face, despite this disaster, still seemed to set in a benevolent smile.

He had arrived from Bari seventeen years before in the great 20,000-strong migration of the last full year of peace. He had found everything ready when he moved into the farm allocated to him—everything down to the last pot and pan and the three months supply of groceries in the larder. He had nothing to do—but work.

For the first three years he worked for wages on probation. Then in small instalments he began to pay for the farm. After twenty-seven years

COURTESY—1

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Abel Stevens

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he would get that longed-for bit of paper, his *riscatto*, his release.

The war had broken in on that dream. His farm like the others still needed *Ente* subsidies to keep it going. It takes an olive tree fifteen years to come to bearing.

Back in the farmhouse, the first in the group of four, with "53" in black paint on the post, the youngest Urbano, his mother hovering over him, was taking his first faltering steps.

Would he one day come into this heritage his father had laboured through the years to build? No one knew. The millions of lire no longer poured from Rome into Italy's "Fourth Shore." Developments halted; the *Ente* and the *Instituto* were chronically short of funds. Today sand lies in heaps across some of the service roads. Last year, in this single colony, fifteen families had left their farms and gone back to Italy. In 1953 and 1954 from all Libya over two thousand farmers had gone home—and the trickle went on.

But the Urbanos were not going—not until they had to. Like many others, the younger members of the family had been born and raised on the Jebel; Libya was their country—they knew no other. And the olive trees they had planted were at last coming into bearing.

These Italian farmers are indeed fine colonists of a sort rare in the world today. They work all hours; they ask little; they live happily in their farmhouses in the ample bosom of their families; they have no need of the mechanized distractions of the towns. Their achievement is impressive: they took what an Italian politician called a "box of sand," and made a fine well-cultivated land of farms.

It was their tragedy that they became the creatures of Mussolini's megalomaniac dreams of a new Roman Empire. Yet Fascism's harsh racialism is not natural to these humble people. It is significant that, despite everything, they get on quite well even now with the Tripolitanians. They are a people almost totally lacking in the colour-consciousness which so greatly hampers colonizers of other nationalities.

But if the Italian farmers are to stay and play the part they clearly could play in the building of independent Libya, they equally with the Arabs still need a great deal of help. As ever in this country, the crux of the matter can be put in one word: "water."

The Arab peasant, dragging his camel to and fro in the scorching sun, hauls the tipple-bucket from the well—and grows a small patch of maize. Down the road an Italian farm—one of the fortunate ones—has an electric pump and pipes, and is surrounded by bounteous acres. But thousands more wells need to be sunk. Water, which rushes off the sun-baked earth in the brief rains and runs to waste in the sea, needs to be gathered by retaining dams. There are hundreds of derelict old Roman cisterns that can be restored.

IN these, as in all other ways, Libya is only at the very start of the road. Yet never before in history has an infant nation been surrounded by so much specialist help and advice. F.A.O., W.H.O., I.L.O., Unesco—the whole brood of international uncles are on hand fussing over the United Nations' first child. Point Four Americans are on the job in force. Britain—as befits the godfather—is impressively represented by scores of specialist officials in Libyan government service.

The danger is that the large development schemes these experts have worked out may remain on paper for lack of qualified Libyans to put them into operation. The Italians provided no secondary education for Arabs; and even now only a quarter of the children are at primary schools. An entire educational system is having to be built up from scratch. It was discovered for instance, that there wasn't even a simple Libyan history for schools. Unesco imported a Syrian historian to prepare one.

But the appetite for education grows fast. Improvised schools work shifts to cram in as many pupils as possible. Slowly, as the new material is sifted, more and more Libyans are being sent abroad to study. I talked one morning with a cheery little adult education expert from Hyderabad who, under Unesco, was working down in the distant Fezzan. He spent much of his time jeeping about the desert, travelling by compass bearing from oasis to oasis, superintending his centres which taught reading, writing and simple general knowledge.

"And it's amazing," he said, enthusiastically, "how quick those chaps are on the uptake. They'll learn in two days what would take ten days elsewhere. I don't know—maybe it's because their minds have lain fallow for centuries." In a Tuareg tribe, always on the move with its flocks, he had instituted a mobile school, its equipment loaded on a camel.

A few minutes later, in the same U.N. Mission building, I met a middle-aged Egyptian who had just triumphantly carried through Libya's first census. For two and a half months the enumerators he had trained had moved through the desert from encampment to encampment, fixing gummed labels to tent-poles before they departed. (Thus avoiding double-counts.) Now the last results were in—and there were yet more young men, sent by each provincial government, to be trained in working the machines that would collate and analyse them.

Proudly the census director, a senior civil servant whom the Egyptian Government had seconded for this job, showed me around the empty offices that would become Libya's statistical department, displayed the serried rows of vacant pigeonholes ready to receive the new nation's vital statistics, the conference room, the cafeteria. . . .

The "United Kingdom of Libya" was building!

Yet each year as Libya celebrates her Resolution Day—the anniversary of the U.N. resolution establishing her independence—the inevitable question asked itself: even with all this expert help, could Libya ever provide the foundation of a truly independent nation? Would Libya, for a start, ever be able to dispense with foreign subsidies and stand on her own feet?

Yes, declared two leading experts boldly—in twenty years. Others preferred to remain non-committal; but in fact the country's potentialities are greater than meet the eye.

Libya in classical times was the granary of Rome; the Italians estimated that Cyrenaica—still largely undeveloped—would support a million colonists.

Then there are unsuspected sources of income: early vegetables for European markets—for Libya has a climatic start even over her North African neighbours; esparto grass, which grows wild in Tripolitania, and commands the highest price on the world market; even a chance of oil at least good enough to cause eight companies to apply for prospecting rights.

So far at least, Britain and the United States, Libya's principal financial backers, are well enough pleased with their investment. In the storm-tossed, treacherous seas of the Arab world, Libya remains a sheltered island of peaceful development where Anglo-American Imperialism is still a naughty word.

In the first federal elections, it is true, a pro-Egyptian anti-Treaty party gained all the seats in Tripoli town. After disturbances the party's leaders were hastily deported to Egypt and calm returned. But the long-term influence of Egypt remains one of the large unanswered questions. Nearly all Libya's judges and schoolteachers are Egyptians—since they were the only qualified people available speaking both Arabic and English—and the Egyptian Government contributes by paying the teachers' fares. Libya, after all, is a fellow member of the Arab League.

FOR the present at least all is serene. Under the towering walls of Tripoli Castle, the old fortress of the Caramanli pashas, the Libyan police, British red caps, and the U.S. Air Force police share a depot, co-operating happily in their law-enforcing mission.

Beneath the majestic colonnades of Independence Street British soldiers crowd into the Y.M.C.A.; down the palm-lined *Adrian Pelt Lungo Mare* (sea front) glide the red MGs and cream Austin-Healeys of the American airmen from the Wheelus Field "Freedom Base." In the big white hotels, in the cafés and clubs, television screens flicker with the Chrysler Show or the adventures of "Rocky King, Detective—Brought to You by Clorets, the Chlorophyll Chewing Gum that makes your breath kissing-sweet." The good United Nations' child has its reward. Libya—thanks to U.S. Air Force enterprise—is the first Arab country to have regular TV, including, even, a weekly Arabic hour.

On the crowded colourful stage of this great international drama, only one figure is missing: the character in the title rôle. Pulling his *barracan* more tightly about him, the Libyan slips unnoticed through this thronged and busy scene, stalking with quiet dignity down Mussolini's triumphal avenues, past the jangling telephones of the U.N. planners, past the MGs and Austin-Healeys—past even "Rocky King, Detective"—to vanish silently into the labyrinth of the old town.

Today he might be the merest extra. But in Act II, perhaps, he will have a speaking part. And in Act III?

He would be a rash man who would guess at *that* denouement. THE END

OPEN TO VIEW

by JAMES LEES-MILNE

Drawn by ROWLAND HILDER

A message reached Montacute. It was for Lord Curzon—from the King's secretary

AT breakfast on May 21, 1923, Lord Curzon of Kedleston, Foreign Secretary in Bonar Law's government, received a letter from the Prime Minister announcing that he had tendered his resignation to the King, and hinting that Curzon was the obvious choice as his successor.

Curzon, who was relaxing at Montacute, in Somerset, spent the day in a state of awful suspense. In the evening a policeman came to the door with a telegram from the King's private secretary calling him immediately to London. Early next morning Curzon took the train. In London the King's secretary called on him, and informed him that the King had asked a practically unknown politician, Stanley Baldwin, to form a government.

Curzon was the tenant of Montacute; the owners of the estate—for four hundred years—were the Phelips family. Sir Edward Phelips, who became Speaker of the House of Commons in 1604, was a man of Puritanical views and strongly anti-Catholic. He led the prosecution of Guy Fawkes. But he had a lighter side to his nature, for he built Montacute House with its curving gables and glittering expanse of casement windows. "Certainly one of the most beautiful and magnificent houses in the world"—thus G. M. Trevelyan, the historian, has written of this stone-built masterpiece, now owned by the National Trust.

Sir Edward's grandson, Colonel Robert Phelips, was anything but a Puritan. After the defeat at Worcester he conducted Charles II, disguised as a groom, to Brighton, where at dead of night he embarked for France.

John Phelips, who inherited Montacute in 1806, was greatly beloved and recklessly extravagant. He used to employ anyone whom he found to be out of work. He also gave huge banquets to his friends in the Long Gallery, where on one occasion he is said to have staged a pony race.

Gambling was his undoing. He laid a wager that one of two flies on the dining-room ceiling would reach the wall before the other. He lost the wager and was obliged to sell a large part of the estate to pay the stake.

How to get there: Montacute is four miles west of Yeovil (S.R. and W.R.). *Open:* October to March: daily (except Tuesdays), 11 till 4. April to September: daily (except Tuesdays), 11 till 6.

No steam for Miss Paget

Continued from page 21

holding staves gaily banded red and white, and the infuriatingly arrogant Fletcher himself, in a chimney-pot hat.

As the landau drew up, he and Fargo broke off the heated parley in which they had become engaged. The gamekeeper gave his mistress a deferential knuckle at brow. A moment later Fletcher stepped boldly up to the opposite side of the vehicle and raised his hat.

"Miss Paget," said he, "these people are trying to stop me doing my work. Please be good enough to order them to go away."

Really, the man spoke as though he were a fond and indulgent parent addressing a fractious child!

SOPHONISBA fixed him with a stony glance which was met by the faintly mocking lift of an eyebrow.

"I shall do nothing of the kind," she answered. "I order *you* to go away, at once."

"With all respect, Miss Paget," he replied, "this happens to be the Queen's highway, not yours. So I think I will take the liberty of staying where I am."

"I advise you not to stay there too long, sir," she told him. "I have sent a messenger to Sir Martin Crouch, the magistrate in Carbury. I expect he will send the Hussars. Perhaps you will take orders from them, Mr. Fletcher."

"Ah, yes," said Fletcher, "Sir Martin! I had the honour of surveying a line across his property ten days ago. A forward-looking man, Sir Martin—quite a disciple of Steam."

"I am confident he knows his duty."

"And I," said Fletcher, "know mine. My duty is to all the merchants and messengers and travellers and people far from home all over the world. They demand that I go on. And the plain fact is that I am no more to be stopped than the waters of the Nile."

"My father considers he has a duty as well. And he utterly forbids you to enter this land. If you are mad enough to attempt to do so he will have you sent to Australia."

"It'll be a very likely land for railways, Australia," said Fletcher. "I'll have to take a chance on that. Now, Miss Paget, I ask you for the last time to call off your men. I mean to take my line through, we won't do sixpen'orth of damage and two or three hours will see our work over. Come now, don't let the blood be on your head. Call off your dogs."

"Mr. Fletcher, if you dare to use force, you will be repelled by force. And if there should be any blood spilled, you'll be hanged at Newgate. You may be sure of that."

"A glorious end," he said, "to be a martyr for Steam." His eyes held hers and his strong mouth widened into a grin.

Sophonisba's cheeks flamed.

"It may interest you to know," she said angrily, "that my father is at this moment arranging with Lord Brewer himself, one of Her Majesty's Ministers, that your brigandage shall be stopped."

"Lord Brewer?" mused Fletcher. "Now, that's a coincidence. One of our directors. I had the pleasure of designing a Gothic viaduct, with battlements, to take a track across his ornamental waters. I may even claim the honour of his Lordship's acquaintance."

"Oh, absurd!" cried Sophonisba. "As if Lord Brewer would ever dream of cultivating *your* acquaintance!"

She immediately regretted this as being unnecessarily rude, but Fletcher only smiled his infuriating smile.

"At any rate," he said, "his lordship laid his grounds open to the survey party and saw that they had all the old ale and game pie that they needed, in the tithe barn. He's no enemy to Steam."

"Whatever he may think of Steam, sir," answered Sophonisba, "he will have only one opinion of malicious trespass, particularly if carried by

"Still love me, Bert?"

force. I do not propose to argue the virtues of Steam with you, but I do defy the insufferable insolence which makes you self-styled disciples of the New Age believe you can ride roughshod over every law and right which opposes you. Mr. Fletcher, while you attempt to do so, you are a common scoundrel and as such I refuse to listen to you any further."

"Common scoundrel I may be, but I still mean to run my line through your land, and even a common scoundrel cannot allow a lady to be witness to bloodshed, though she be the cause of it. Come, coachman, drive on there!"

He reached for the nearest horse's bridle and, incensed, Sophonisba reached out, snatched the coachman's whip and slashed out with it, catching Fletcher across the face.

Fletcher winced. His large hand shot out and closed gently but very firmly over her small wrist, and in that moment Fargo threw himself at him.

What happened next happened too quickly for Sophonisba to follow. She felt the rough hand leave her wrist, saw Fletcher's broad back sway towards her as he took the shock of Fargo's onslaught. Then Fargo was swung round into her line of vision. His brawny right arm was doubled up behind him, his face contorted with pain. Fargo was held, helpless, in a grip he had clearly never met before.

A ripple of nervous surprise went through the ranks of the Mountferris servants. No one moved. Fletcher put his free hand against Fargo's broad chest, sent him reeling into the hedge with a little push and closed his hand again over Sophonisba's wrist.

He shook his head almost sadly but his eyes, above the ugly raw mark that the whip had made, were alive with angry amusement.

"Miss Sophonisba Paget, you should be ashamed of yourself," he said softly.

He prized the whip from her fingers, handed it calmly back to the coachman, turned his back on her and strode back to his own men with an easy gait.

Sophonisba felt her heart thumping and knew she was near to tears, not only because of his easy conquest of her and Fargo but because she had the horrible feeling that he had conducted himself far more like a person of breeding than she.

She was relieved to see Fargo picking himself out of the hedge, massaging his wrist and looking dazed but otherwise none the worse for his encounter. He looked at her questioningly and made a move towards the enemy's camp, but Sophonisba waved him to a halt with an agitated flutter of her slender fingers.

She riveted her gaze on Fletcher who now, seemingly oblivious to her presence, was squatting in the opposite hedge, holding a leisurely conference with his party. The red mark was already fading on his cheekbone but it was an act of providence that the lash had not caught him full on the eye, and she felt almost sick with shame. A strange man. A very strange man!

The stalemate continued. The Irishman leaned his back against an ashbole and went to sleep. Fletcher chewed grass stems thoughtfully for a while, then lit a cigar and walked half a mile up the lane and back, carefully shadowed from the opposite hedge by a gamekeeper detailed for that duty.

The lank young man put down the case he had been carrying and idly climbed the ash tree against which the Irishman sat, settling himself at last in a crook of branches. The air became solid with heat and the white haze in the sky fell lower until the spire of the village church a mile away became a phantom thing.

The Irishman woke up and sang an unintelligible song, two of the navigators sparred playfully, and Sophie

COURTESY—2

The small courtesies sweeten life, the great ennoble it.

Christian Nestell Bovee

sat erect in her carriage with the air of one in complete command of the situation—an air she was far from feeling.

Then the groom, plastered with dirt and sweat, returned from his errand to the magistrate to say that Sir Martin had promised to send the village constable as soon as the hay was in, probably tomorrow morning.

Sophonisba immediately sent off another messenger direct to the barracks at Carbury where she knew that there were officers anxious to please the heiress of Mountferris.

With one thing and another this extraordinary confrontation in Bilbo Lane continued for exactly four minutes under three and a half hours.

At the end of that time the lank young man unwound himself from the ash tree and came stiffly to earth nursing a barked shin. A few moments later Fletcher rose from the bank upon which he had been sitting and called out: "Take the gear back, lads. We've wasted time enough."

The railway party shuffled to their feet, gathered their belongings and began to trudge off along the lane towards the village. As he went, the Irishman whistled and swiped at hedgerow weeds with his billhook. But Fletcher stayed where he was, looking after them without expression.

Their going was a great relief to Sophie. It was her victory. She had humbled this man at last, and she only wished she could feel some vestige of pride in her achievement.

"So you see, Mr. Fletcher," she said, trying to revive her spirits, which felt as cramped as her limbs, "I have stopped the waters of the Nile, after all. I hope it will be a lesson to you. I'm very glad to see you know when you're beaten."

HE looked at her quizzically. "Yes," he said. "I know when I'm beaten. But do you?"

"What do you mean?"

"It may surprise you, ma'am, but I don't like violence. I'm a man of peace. If I can get what I want without it, why break bones?"

"Ar," said Fargo, forgetting his station for a moment and thrusting his large and fiery face into the conversation, "but you couldn't get it, could you, broke bones or no?"

"No?" Fletcher murmured with that lift of the eyebrow. "Perhaps you'd like to know that we waited here half an hour, doing everything but beat a big drum, before your people spotted us? Who'd ever fancy, except a lady of quality who never saw a train"—here he bowed to Sophie—"that you could build a line here, where we're standing, slap through the old quarry."

"Eh?" cried Fargo, getting redder. "What's this?"

"We came here," Fletcher went on calmly, "and we made a noise and talked murder, to draw off your forces, Miss Paget. Well, we drew 'em off, and we kept 'em bottled up as long as we needed.

"I never thought it'd be quite so easy. And in the meantime a light party of three men, dressed in the way the major dresses his gamekeepers—like this fellow here—made a quick survey of our route for us. It runs a mile and a half away to the south, along the river on the other side of the castle, the only way it *could* go. When my man in the tree saw the signal that that was done, down he came and I sent the lads home. It pains me to have to say so, Miss Paget, but you've been caught."

"You villain!" Sophie whispered. "You will be transported for this!"

"I doubt it, ma'am," Fletcher answered easily. "The country's behind Steam."

"Well, damme," growled Fargo, still lusting for revenge, "if the law won't touch you, this will." And he let fly a round oath and a right fist together.

"Fargo!" cried Sophonisba, in a peculiar tone, not certain whether to applaud or upbraid him.

Duncan Fletcher slowly sat up in the dust with blood coming from the corner of his mouth. He stood up and carefully shook his head. Then he took a step forward and knocked Fargo reeling against the carriage wheel.

"Very well then," he said in a tone Sophie had never heard before, "if we must break bones!"

Fargo came back with murder in his eyes. Those who watched knew his massive strength, knew that he was too cunning to be caught a second time in one of Fletcher's strange grips, knew that, inevitably, he would beat the surveyor to a pulp.

They were so confident of this that no one came to his assistance. He was an ox of a man; strong as an ox, slow as an ox. While his next blow was still in mid-air, Fletcher hit him twice, once between the eyes, once hard under the breastbone. A moment later the gamekeeper was on his knees in the dust, gasping and retching. The horses in the landau plunged and fidgeted.

"Don't stand there!" cried Sophonisba, her mind now made up. "Seize that man!"

Weight of numbers told in the end. But when they finally had Fletcher pinioned, one groom lay apparently

lifeless in the ditch, a gamekeeper was struggling out of a blackberry bush in which he hung upside down, another was on all fours in the lane, trying unsuccessfully to stand up, and Fargo sat on a bank, vacant and bemused.

They hauled Fletcher, four men clamping his arms, up to the landau. He looked at Sophie with a tousled and bloodied face, gasping and shining with sweat. But nevertheless he grinned, with relish, with triumph, with amusement.

Sophie tried not to meet that gaze.

"You have brought this on yourself, Mr. Fletcher. Take him to the house. My father will deal with him when he returns."

They marched him back to the East Lodge, which was Fargo's. The gamekeeper was to be his jailer, an arrangement which surprisingly enough seemed to suit them both, in as much as a laconic sort of cordiality rapidly developed between the two men. Mrs. Fargo bandaged both impartially, chiding them as if they were ten-year-old urchins.

In the meantime Sophonisba drove down to that part of the estate which the survey party had crossed, and examined fences, coverts and harvest fields; she was not exactly certain what a survey party did, and was a little bewildered to find that apparently it did nothing, for she could find hardly any trace of their passage.

But at least the inspection helped for a little while to keep her mind from brooding over Duncan Fletcher and the disturbing ache she had felt at the sight of blood and bruises on his face.

On her way home she met Captain Rawlins of the Hussars jingling up to Mountferris with six of his men; she thanked him graciously, informed him that the situation was well in hand and left him to jingle back glumly to barracks, all his romantic fancies of rescuing her from distress rudely dispelled.

It was late dusk when she came at last in her landau back to the East Lodge, where she was somewhat surprised to find her captive drinking ale in the little porch with Fargo.

Her return journey had been a very thoughtful one and the sight of the faithful Fargo so ready to bury the hatchet with his fistic conqueror did not altogether displease her.

But she had not time to make any comment before there was a grating of wheels on the grit of the driveway and there stopped beside her the carriage with the coat of arms on its panels, bearing back from London Major Hector himself.

The squire stepped out of his vehicle and gave his daughter a paternal brushing of the cheek. Had the light not been so dim she might have noticed the yonderly look in his remotely focused eyes. But she did not, and, her indignation with Fletcher temporarily returning, began at once to tell him what had occurred in his absence.

"Yes, my dear," said her father at last, not having heard a quarter of what she said. "Yes, yes. But don't bother me with every hedgerow brawl. Have Fargo send the fellow over to Sir Martin. Do you know how far it is from London to Edinburgh?"

"How what?"

"Is it three hundred miles? Or four? Now at forty miles an hour—four tens are forty—why, damme, it might only take ten hours. Ten hours just floating along! No bumps, no dust—just floating along!"

"But, Father," said Sophonisba, "you don't listen to me. I've had a rather new and disagreeable experience. The railway party——"

"It's new, of course," said her father. "It isn't every day there's a totally new experience in the world. But how you could possibly think it disagreeable——"

"Think what disagreeable?"

"Why," declared Major Paget, "riding in a railway train, of course! What did you think I was talking about? As soon as I saw Lord Brewer he said, 'Hector, before you say another word, come with me!' And he insisted on taking me for a railway ride. At first I was fool enough to try to refuse. In the end I went four times."

"Father! You mean you actually approve of railways?"

"Approve? Of course I approve! Hallo, who's that over there? 'Pon my soul, it's that fellow Fletcher! Well, that's extraordinary fortunate. Hi, there, Mr. Fletcher! Be good enough to step over here for a moment."

"Father, you must *listen* to me!" cried Sophie.

"Fletcher," said the major, "you know I always thought there was something in this Steam business, and damme, I'm right. I do believe it's the greatest thing since wheels."

"I rejoice to hear you say so, sir," answered the surveyor.

"I want to know a great deal more about it. Lord Brewer said you were the best man to ask in the country, next to Stephenson himself. He spoke very highly of you."

"I am very grateful to his lordship for his good opinion."

"You must tell me about Steam, sir. You must come up to the castle, sir, and dine, now, tonight. Oh, I can see you've had a hard day in the field, but my man Strood will fix you up. Sophie, bring Mr. Fletcher up to the house and turn him over to Strood."

"But, sir——" began Fletcher.

Sophie, observing his worried frown, suddenly smiled. There was no doubt about it, no doubt at all—Mr. Fletcher was ill at ease. Such a novel situation afforded her quite the most pleasurable sensation she had experienced in a long time.

"Pray step into this carriage, Mr. Fletcher," she said. "You heard what my father said. The waters of the Nile are flowing strongly again."

Fletcher shot her a sharp look, then shrugged. A moment later his powerful body was seated rather tensely beside hers. The coachman cracked his whip, the carriage began to sway, pushing its occupants' shoulders closer together, and the horses set off at a trot for Mountferris Castle.

Sophie stole a glance at Fletcher. His bruised face was set, his gaze was riveted on his large hands, tightly clasped over one knee. The whip mark still showed on his cheek and conscience smote her afresh. She reached out and touched the mark with cool, slender finger tips.

"Does it hurt very much?" she asked in a small voice.

"No!" he said gruffly.

"I am truly sorry," she said at last. "You have acted like a gentleman throughout, Mr. Fletcher. You must carry the poorest opinion of me."

"Indeed, ma'am, I don't," he said, then, and looked full at her. It was a long, steady look with no challenge, no arrogance at all. Only a kind of cautious questioning from a man about to drop his defences. For the first time in years, Duncan Fletcher completely dismissed Steam from his mind. . . .

It was exactly eighteen months later that the first train, bedecked with flags, puffed through Mountferris Park. Mr. Duncan Fletcher and his wife, Sophonisba, shared a plush seat in the first open truck.

At first even the major's new devotion to Steam had barely reconciled him to Duncan Fletcher as a son-in-law, but when he discovered that the Fletchers were what passed for a good family in the north, he had given his blessings and laid on the grandest wedding reception Mountferris Castle was ever likely to see.

"This is a great day for Steam in these parts, sir," said Fargo, seated opposite Fletcher to whom he was now both valet and devoted servant. "None of us ever thought to travel as quick and comfortable as this. Why, this journey will open a lot of folk's eyes hereabouts. Steam'll make a rare difference to gentry like you and the major when you've occasion to make the journey to London."

"I suspect that Steam is going to change everybody's life quite considerably, Fargo," said Duncan Fletcher. He smiled proudly at his wife. "As much for the better, I hope, as it changed mine." THE END

COURTESY—3

Politeness is fictitious benevolence.

Samuel Johnson

Watchdogs on the trawlers' beat

Continued from page 19

poachers in British territorial waters, Robin's ships keep watch for vessels contravening the numerous navigational and fishing regulations. Within territorial limits, Robin, Bateman and the officers commanding the other ships have power to board any fishing boat to examine gear or to hold inquiries at which evidence is given on oath.

Abroad, the squadron turns altruistic, protecting British ships from wrongful arrest and warning those found poaching in foreign territorial waters. "In fact," says Robin, "if we find any of our trawlers inside the line we're damn rude to them, and we report them to their owners and to the Ministry."

It is within the squadron's terms of reference to give mechanical aid to fishing vessels. During a winter patrol, Coquette's engineers repaired a trawler's galley and enabled the men to have their first hot meal for two days.

Some time later, in thick fog off the Faroe Islands, Coquette picked up a brief radio telephone conversation between two Scottish trawler skippers, one of whom appeared to be in trouble.

Coquette called the trawler in vain. "Some skippers jealously guard their own particular fishing grounds," Captain Robin explained later. "They won't stay on the air for long in case their rivals get a bearing on them."

Suddenly a trawler loomed out of the fog. Robin sent over a boarding party, ostensibly to measure her nets. The officer-in-charge found everything in order. He also found a cagey master who professed to know nothing of trawler movements in the area.

Coquette went her way and by sheer perseverance found the troubled trawler fifteen miles off the coast. When she had started to recover her catch, her trawl winch had broken. For six hours the ships stood to in mid-ocean while the minesweeper's engine-room artificer and chief stoker worked on the winch. Long after dark, the ships parted. A few hours later, Coquette heard the trawler's master radioing a friend to say that he had recovered his trawl and a good catch.

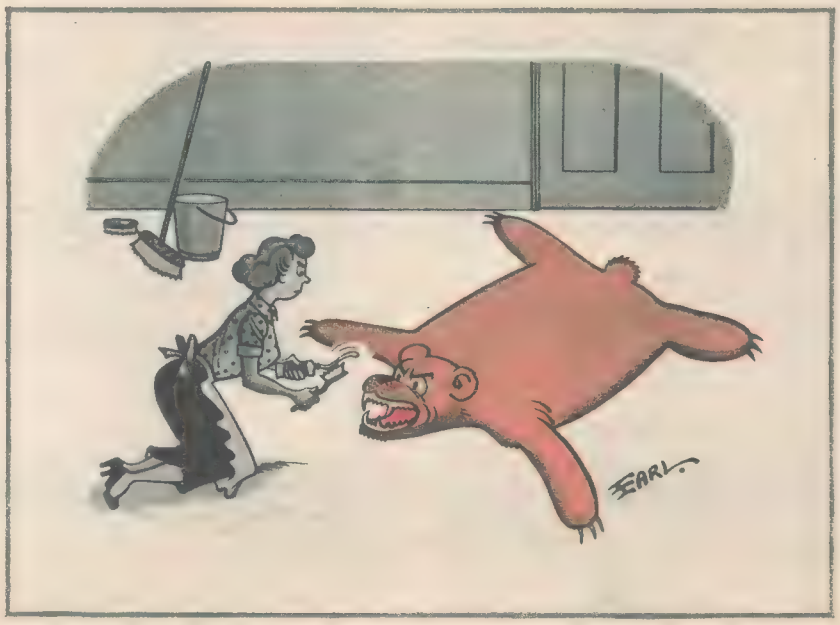
On the Arctic patrols, the minesweepers carry medical officers. The trawlers keep them busy, for the doctors have to cope with every type of disorder from toothache to stomach ulcers.

In a fierce blizzard one winter afternoon, the minesweeper Mariner left the shelter of an Icelandic harbour to answer a call from three trawlers, all with badly injured men on board. Through the night, Mariner fought the high seas and hundred-mile-an-hour winds, and found the trawlers in a fjord at five in the morning.

In rough water the trawlers took it in turn to come alongside and transfer the men on stretchers. The operation took eight hours. The injured men reached the surgery safely, and the ship's doctor was able to tend them on the way back to port.

The fishermen scorn danger, often to their cost; to try to protect them, the minesweepers have often to sail deliberately into that same danger.

Last year, two trawlers, Lorella and Roderigo, sent out distress calls, saying that they were starting to capsize. In a hurricane-force wind, Mariner went to their aid. But she arrived too late.



A member of the minesweeper's crew, Able Seaman James Herzog, described Mariner's efforts to get back to port. "The waves were as high as the bridge," he wrote in his diary. "The skipper tried to turn the ship round three times in two hours. Each time we got so far and almost turned over. We were getting desperate. : . .

"Then finally—by a magnificent piece of seamanship—he managed it. He did it by counting the times of the waves over an hour, and then, with a beautiful piece of timing, we went hard over and round between two fifty-foot waves. After that, with a stern sea, we raced back to the coast."

For their efforts on behalf of fish and fishermen, the men of the protection squadron get a mixed reception from the fishermen themselves. The trawler master who has received medical, mechanical or other service (one minesweeper even replenished a trawler's galley with yeast) will usually signal: "Do you want a fry?"—a basket or two of fish.

However, there are other trawlermen, usually the lawbreakers, who have few kind words for the squadron. Not long ago, one of the minesweepers picked up a highly blasphemous radio telephone conversation between two trawler masters. Such conversations are against the law and it is part of fishery protection to prevent them.

The minesweeper captain ordered the masters, who used only their Christian names, to identify themselves.

"Jimmy," said one, "tell that grey naval so-and-so to protect his fish elsewhere."

The other accordingly told the minesweeper captain to mind his own so-and-so business.

The trawler masters were breaking one law which will always be difficult for Her Majesty's Fifth Fishery Protection Squadron to enforce. THE END

This is *My* life

Continued from page 17

puzzled clerk with the explanation, "I remember putting them in the wrong place."

In the days that followed, it so happened that I was able to discover more files that others could not trace. If I was fooling some of the people all of the time, I certainly wasn't taking in my immediate superior, an efficient, pipe-smoking official called John Callaghan. After noting that the report of a file's disappearance was invariably followed by my temporary absence, he went to the strong-room himself and, searching around, found "the body."

I was coming to know the general manager's office as well as our own front parlour, but when I was summoned shortly afterwards I gave in to nerves I had not known even in those jittery moments before my first fight broadcast. My hands trembled, and my stomach was a jelly. I was kept waiting in the outer office fully ten minutes before the general manager's secretary appeared and said: "Come through, Mr. Andrews."

The general manager was a medium-sized man, but he looked like a giant sitting in judgment at the far end of a royal mile of thick-piled carpet. He regarded me for a moment over his spectacles. I was really shaking now, and wondering what my mother and father would have to say if I went home with the news that I had been fired.

"Sit down, Andrews. I've kept you waiting because I've been trying to make up my mind whether you are just lazy—or dishonest." He paused. "Fortunately for you I've decided that you're just lazy, and I will not sack you. But don't let it happen again. That's all." I got up to go, then he added: "You'll come back every night until all those files are straightened out." I did. The job didn't take as long as I expected because another junior clerk who had also been dumping files, though not on my gigantic scale, was seized with remorse and came in to help me.

This was only one of several one-sided brushes I had with the general manager, and familiarity didn't lessen the awe in which I held him. I stumbled from crisis to crisis. The mixture of studies with the Dublin University external department and those connected with insurance examinations, boxing training, occasional broadcasts, and the uncomfortable office job began to take its toll. For some days I had felt a little off-colour and one Thursday afternoon when I was going back to the office from lunch I felt dizzy and sick in the bus. I made my way to the doctor, and he ordered me to bed. While he did not say as much, I gathered it was some sort of nervous breakdown, and he told me to cut down on the things I was doing. For about three weeks after that, I eased up, and dropped the boxing training entirely.

The enforced inactivity gave me the chance to think things out more clearly. I was making hardly any headway in broadcasting, yet I knew that I could not continue insurance work indefinitely. My schooldays' article on boxing training for the *Evening Herald*, and the fact that I had another published about Primo Carnera mainly from jottings made over the years, encouraged me to think I might make a go of journalism. I called on Billy Murphy, a rugged Dubliner who was sports editor of the *Herald*, and he offered to let me accompany him to a Gaelic football match. He would do the report for publication, and I would write a test piece.

Though I had played the game occasionally at school, without distinction, I knew little about it and had the greatest difficulty in knowing who was scoring. My enthusiasm was for soccer, and between this and Gaelic football is a great divide.

It is no wonder that many people outside Ireland regard the Irish as hard to understand. Nowhere in the world is there a country with so many separationist organizations, and once a man senses this fact, he is halfway to understanding the character of the people. In Irish sport, there were deviationists long before the word came to have its present meaning: even today, it is tacitly understood that a member of the Gaelic Athletic Association should have nothing to do with soccer—a legacy of the long struggle for independence. This makes it rather embarrassing for a president of the Republic who may be a member of the G.A.A. to attend in his official capacity an international soccer match.

As a soccer man, I was soon left behind by the Gaelic version on which I was to do my test piece. Murphy was plainly disappointed, yet soon afterwards he gave me another chance when the cricket season opened. I was to do a running report for the evening editions on the Phoenix Club's opening game, followed by a longer piece for the Sunday paper the following day. If I felt like calling for help on Gaelic football, I was submerged and beyond rescue on cricket. Murphy, sensing my lack of assurance, asked: "'You feel you can do it, lad?"

"Sure," I said.

For the evening edition, I got the names of batsmen and bowlers, added five lines on the weather, and sent the copy away by runner. As the afternoon wore on, the whole thing seemed unending and pointless and I left at teatime. Later, I telephoned the club pavilion from town and was given further names and scores. From these, I did the Sunday paper story.

Something told me it would be to my social and physical advantage to avoid Murphy, but with the eager impertinence of youth I called on him during my Monday lunch break. He was rather surprised to see me. After about five seconds I felt he was having to exercise a good deal of self control to keep his hands off me. Livid as he was, he managed to point out quite analytically that apart from the fact that my work as a whole was dire, I had named amateurs without their initials—an unpardonable thing—and completely ignored the bowling averages. Until that moment, I didn't know there were such things. I left Murphy's office in a hurry.

This was not the only setback. Some ideas for what, in all innocence, I considered to be potentially world-beating radio programmes came back from Radio Eireann unwanted. As there were no more than four or five fight broadcasts a year, it was not surprising that I appeared to be making most headway in an unexpected direction—the insurance business. I had scraped through the first two professional examinations, and one morning the fire manager informed me that I was to be promoted as an assistant surveyor, which meant that I had to assess fire risks in homes, factories and offices.

My first job was at the Hydro Hotel, County Clare. I made notes of the materials used in the building, its accessibility and communications, and produced plans and maps showing the location of the premises and their design. I preferred the work because it allowed me more freedom. I could call at Radio Eireann personally, and sometimes there was an opportunity to work out radio ideas in cafés.

There was now no need for the furtive telephone calls in which I had been aided and abetted by the Hibernian's relief operator, a petite, auburn-haired girl named Maire Gannon. Maire would let me make my private calls, many of them to Hedy Nolan, during her lunch hour duty.

Going into the switchroom one day I asked Maire to get Hedy for me. "Oh, he's on the line already," she replied. This happened again and again. I wasn't surprised some time later when they announced that they were to be married.

In the evenings at home I was still writing poetry. At this time, a highbrow literary magazine, *The Bell*, was a big attraction for the group of intending writers, dramatists and actors with whom I had linked up at school. We continued to meet, and *The Bell* had a tremendous fascination for me. Many a time I thought it would be the greatest thing in the world to break into it, and when a new editor named Harry Craig took over I really serenaded him. Finally he agreed to let me try an article. I aimed to produce a really great work in miniature, full of romance and idealism, but it was boxing Craig wanted me to write about. I interviewed just about everyone in the game, and produced a six thousand words review of the Irish Amateur Boxing Association. It needed reshaping, but it was published—unfortunately in the last issue before the magazine went under. The ten guineas I was expecting didn't materialize.

The lesson, however, was clear. If even a literary editor associated me with boxing, then others might be even more ready to do so; perhaps there might be a boxing column in it somewhere. There was one considerable snag. On the nights when there was no commentary, I was finding it difficult to get past the doormen at the National Stadium. This was partially solved by using the boxers' entrance whether there was a commentary or not and so making my face familiar to the doorman, but it did not always work. Where the professional shows were promoted, I was completely unknown. I could not afford the ringside seats which alone would give me as close a view as I needed, so I became a steward, selling programmes and showing people to their places. When the bell sounded, I could stalk in a kneeling position as near to the ring as possible.

Later, finding even this position too remote to know what was really going on, I became a second to the boxers. This, too, had its limitations, and it was while walking through Woolworth's one lunchtime that I got the best idea. At one counter they were selling printed-while-you-wait business cards. I ordered a set bearing the words:

EAMONN ANDREWS

Radio Eireann Boxing Commentator

We didn't run to a phone at home, so I had the firm's number put in. I knew all too well that neither Radio Eireann nor the Hibernian were likely to approve of such enterprise. What mattered, though, was that it worked.

I USED the card for the first time to get into the National Stadium. The doorman hesitated for a moment, then nodded me inside. Another time, it got me into Dalymount Park for a heavyweight fight in which Jack Doyle was engaged. I desperately wanted to interview Doyle and when the fight was over, I made for his dressing-room. It was guarded by two massive characters at least as big as Doyle himself. I began to lose my nerve, and diffidently waved the card in their faces. One of them opened the door reluctantly, then pushed me inside.

There, Doyle was lying flat out on the massage table with Movita, his trim, dark-haired wife, feeding him something from a bottle. Suddenly, I felt it was no place to be, and I was beginning to worry how to get *out* when Movita moved aside and Doyle took my card. He looked very tired. "Tell your listeners . . ." he began. I wasn't even listening myself: those beefy guards were on my mind.

"Sure," I said. It was a relief to leave.

Whenever I used one of my cards, I always made sure of getting it back. If one got out of my hands, there would almost certainly be hell to pay. I kept them all, until they were so tatty and fingersoiled that I couldn't bring myself to present them.

I was now beginning to feel perfectly at ease during fight commentaries, except in those first few warming-up minutes, and in an effort to improve my introductions I decided one day to write some of the descriptive material in advance conveying the atmosphere: the crowd scenes, the haze of cigar smoke, the smells. But even as I began reading it over the air I knew it was a failure. It was flowery, full of purple patches, and for the first time I realized that in commentary work a script falls far short of ad libbing. It was phoney, and the microphone gave it away.

Nobody at Radio Eireann remarked on it, however, and a few days later I was invited to do a test for racing commentators. Although I had not seen more than two horse races in my life, it seemed a great chance to break new ground. I spoke to a friend who knew all about the game and he briefed me thoroughly. I acquainted myself with the jockeys' colours and, as I took my place in the stand, I could not see how anyone could go wrong: there

Spot the Lawbreaker

Somewhere in this scene, the law is being broken. Can you see where? A barrister gives the answer on page 44

DRAWN BY RONALD LAMPITT

COURTESY—4

True politeness consists in being easy one's self, and in making everyone about one as easy as one can.

Alexander Pope

IN JOHN BULL NEXT WEEK

W. E. ARMSTRONG surveys the crisis in

RACING

HORSE-RACING is as native to Britain as primroses, or beer—and the sport here is the finest in the world. But this great tradition is in danger. In two penetrating articles—the first of which will appear next week in JOHN BULL—W. E. Armstrong tells how British racing is facing the worst crisis in its history

Salesman with a musical touch

TO James Rushworth's shop come buskers and famous musicians. And he'll sell them anything from a cathedral organ to a gramophone needle

Tropics in the living room

EACH year a million exotic green plants brighten British homes. Half of them come from Tom Rochford's Hertfordshire nursery

were only so many horses and one had to win.

Another commentator being tried out that day at Baldoyle Racecourse was Micheal O'Hehir, who has since become brilliant at the job, sharing the microphone at Grand Nationals with Raymond Glendenning. He can spot a horse with his eyes closed. I didn't see Michael that afternoon: we did staggered commentaries on a closed circuit to the studio.

My test began, and I knew that despite my swotting of the colours I would be safer relying on the numbers on the horses' flanks. It was a mile and two furlongs race, with thirteen starters, and I was lost from the "off." The high wind caught the saddlecloths and flapped the numbers about so much that I could rarely make them out. Nevertheless, I whipped up the commentary to make it sound exciting.

As the horses rounded the far bend, I found that the cumbersome field glasses got in the way. I put them aside. I would have to bluff out the race, at least until they came into the straight in front of the stand. I was still whipping it up and saying "Kildare is in front and The Ivy is dropping back" when a tweedy ruddy-cheeked spectator just below me suddenly turned round, unable to stand any more of it, and bellowed: "Don't be a bloody fool. Kildare is last and The Ivy is second last." With a lip microphone which censors extraneous sound I might have got away with it, but the open "mike" I was using carried this spontaneous correction right back to the studio.

I gave the tweedy man a dirty look, and retired hurt. It was a sort of mutual kindness ever after that the producer and I never mentioned the incident.

Despite this failure, other outside broadcasting jobs came my way, including soccer commentaries, and now that the lessons of my earlier experiences in sports reporting had registered, I took it up again, this time with the *Irish Times*. Mostly, it was hockey and hurling I covered for them—at seven shillings and sixpence a report.

Even the Baldoyle race commentary fiasco had its compensation: through the audition, I met some of the racecourse officials and they gave me the job of calling out the runners over the course loudspeakers. It meant three guineas for an afternoon's work, paid in cash. On the first day, I had a flutter on the opening race and when my horse came in second last I tried again. By the time I was through, the bookmakers had my three guineas. Unfortunately, I didn't learn from this experience and never a day's work at Baldoyle was done without my losing every penny I had earned.

The radio work came in steadily: there were short story readings now—a development that must have surprised those who had tried to drum elocution into me—and I was offered the commentary on the Ireland v. England soccer international at Dalymount Park, Dublin. It was a midweek game, and the entire ninety minutes were to be broadcast. On the Thursday before the game, a colleague called Brian Durnin, who was to do the summaries, telephoned suggesting that we might visit Belfast on the Saturday to get acquainted with the English players who had a match there before coming on to Dublin.

It was a good idea—I had never even seen the England team—but I knew that I would not be permitted to take the Saturday morning off for the trip north: already I had been excused the following Tuesday afternoon for the commentary. I therefore told Durnin it was out of the question, but that night at home the problem was still on my mind and I asked my sister to telephone the office on the Saturday morning to say that I was ill. Kathleen was against it, but finally she agreed. I let Durnin know that I would be joining him.

Everything ran smoothly in Belfast and right through until the interval of the Tuesday game. I rounded off the commentary and Brian took over with his summary. To my dismay, he began: "I don't think England are playing as well as they did when we saw them in Belfast on Saturday, do you, Eamonn?" Next morning, I awaited the inevitable summons from on high. At about ten thirty, the general manager sent his invitation. Guilt written all over me, I traipsed across that carpet once more, and the lush pile seemed more like broken glass.

He put down the telephone as I approached and said: "I was listening to the broadcast yesterday, Andrews. What was all this about your being in Belfast on Saturday?"

"Oh, that!" I said, trying to appear unconcerned. "We did it to give some authority to the broadcast."

"You were ill on Saturday?"

"I was," I replied.

I knew that he didn't believe me, but I was in so deep now that any bluff seemed better than none.

In the days that followed, I realized that one lie only led to another in this strangely unbalanced life I was leading. The insurance company could not be expected to put up with my irresponsible behaviour much longer. More energetically now, I pursued work in journalism and broadcasting. At home, I threw out a few hints about dropping insurance and setting up as a freelance journalist and broadcaster.

My father, who had never lost a day's work in his life except through illness, pointed out firmly the insecurity of the life that attracted me so much, and my mother was sure that I was too young to know what I was talking about. I was twenty-three, restless and unsettled.

Full of uncertainty, I stayed in the insurance job, hoping that some substantial and lasting work would come my way from Radio Eireann. Then, one autumn day in 1945, I had another interview with the drama director about a play part. Again, he explained that it would involve afternoon rehearsals. Could I attend them? When I left, I walked through the town to the O'Connell Bridge over the Liffey, trying anxiously to make up my mind.

My father was working late, and I waited until he got home before announcing that in the morning I intended to resign from the Hibernian.

"Sure you know what you're doing, son?" he asked. I assured him that my mind was made up.

"All right. If you're resigning, you're resigning."

Mother was less easily convinced. "It seems a pity to give it all up now you've passed three examinations."

Nobody at the office was surprised, the general manager least of all. That night, with two friends, I went out to one of the bona-fide houses outside the city boundary where they serve drinks till midnight. There, men were drinking stout so thick that you could trot a mouse across it, and the same old arguments could be heard—all about plays, books, politics, and inevitably, Partition.

Eventually one of my friends returned to the subject of my resignation. "I don't blame you," he said. "With all that radio work you'd be a fool. . . ."

As I was to discover much more forcibly later, a few radio appearances can give a tremendously exaggerated impression of affluence and success. In fact, all I could expect for certain was two guineas a week from my radio column, and I was throwing up all of four pounds ten shillings a week to do it. Yet there wasn't a man in all the twenty-six counties who felt more excited and free than I did that night.

NEXT WEEK: I leave home for the magic lure of London

Spot the Lawbreaker

See page 43

Two Statutes of the last century make it an offence to obstruct, annoy or endanger residents or passers-by with a cart or carriage on a public footpath. And in several cases, says a barrister-at-law, magistrates have held that a roller-skate is a carriage within the meaning of these Acts. If the offender is over fourteen, he is liable to be bound over at a juvenile court; a lad between eight and fourteen may get that treatment if he has been in similar trouble before. A boy under eight is too young to be charged before a court.

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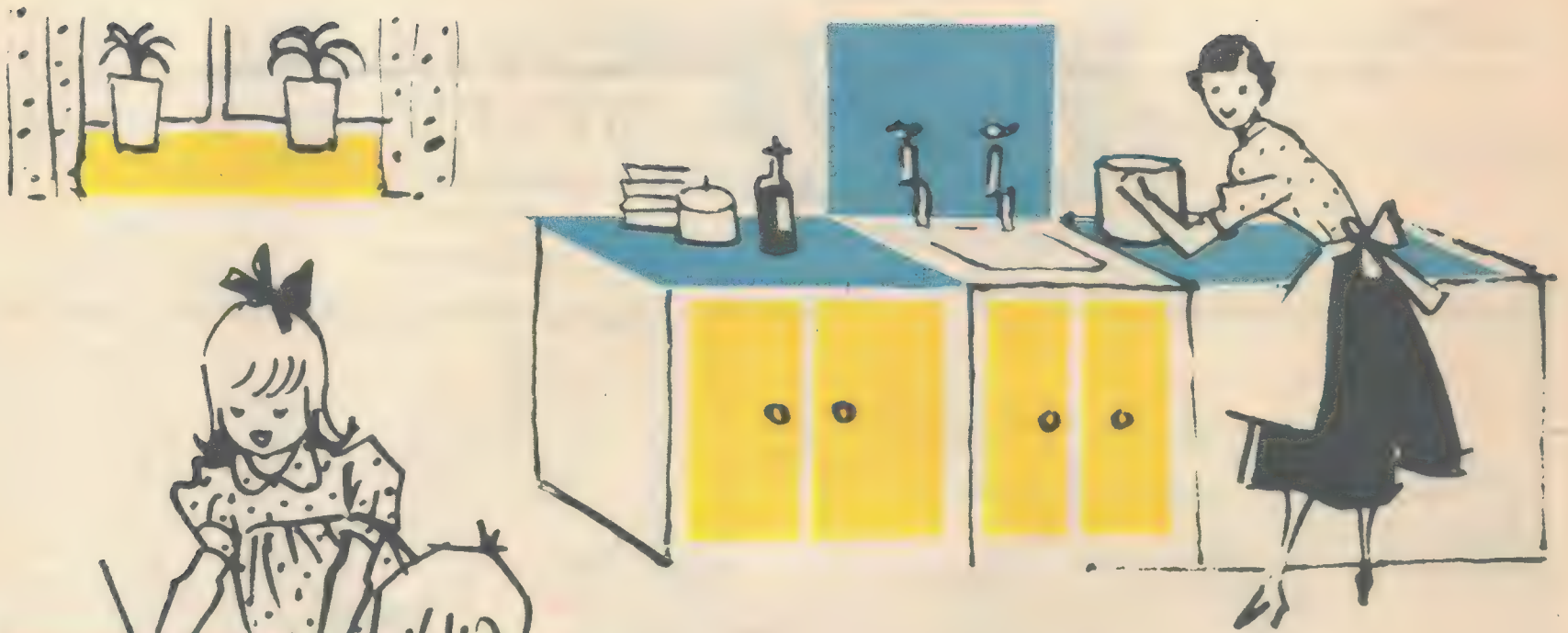

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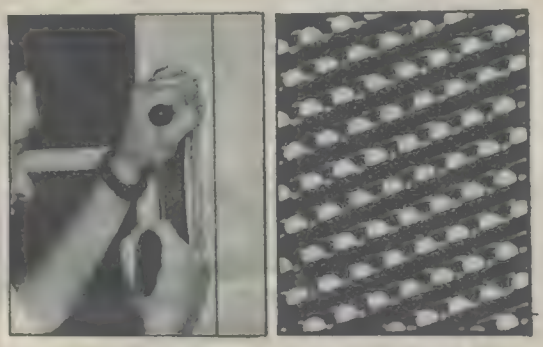

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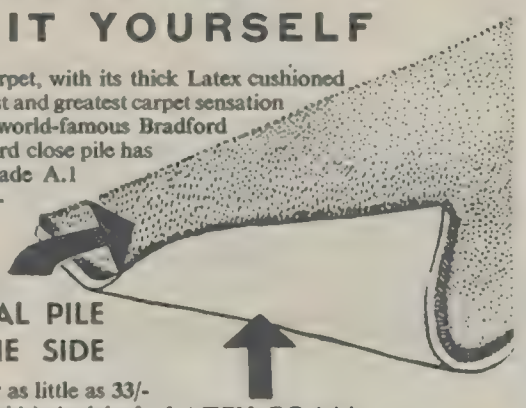

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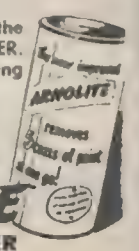

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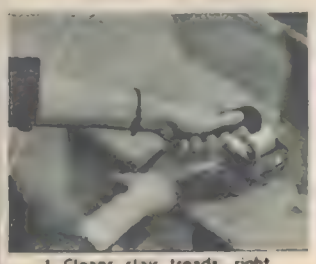

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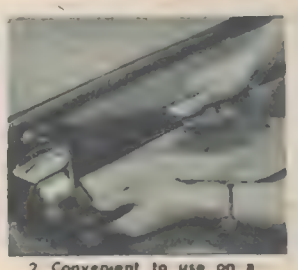

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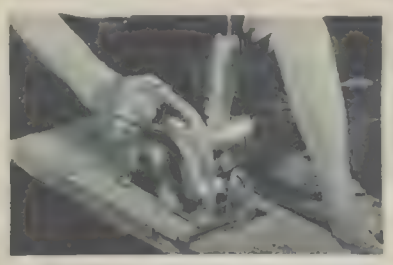

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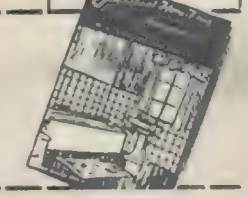

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Beyond the black stump

Continued from page 15

said. "I got a swell job, Dad. What makes you think it's not?"

"I just got an idea that living in Arabia and Australia and all those sort of places—maybe you'd be getting tired of it by now."

"I kind of like the work, Dad. The places aren't much to live in, but I make good money."

"I know it, son." He paused. "You wouldn't rather work here?"

"Here in Hazel?"

"Here in this office."

There was a pause. "I never thought about it, Dad. I dunno that there's much here I could do."

"You could run the business and the engineering side."

"What about you, Dad? That's what you're doing."

"There's a lot of other things I'd like to do, son, before I get too old. I'd like to expand this business in a lot of ways. Moving earth, for one. There's not a real road contractor this side of Portland."

"I'll have to go to Australia now, Dad, anyway," Stanton said. "I couldn't just walk out on Topex at a minute's notice 'n' leave them flat."

"Sure you can't," his father said. "I wouldn't want you in the business if you were liable to behave like that." He paused. "How long do you reckon to be in Australia?"

"I wouldn't know, Dad. I've got just the one hole to dig so far as I know—take about a year, maybe. I could make a break then, if they want me to go on out there. But I guess I'll have to go and dig that one."

"I could wait a year," his father said, "so long as I knew you were coming. I'd appreciate it if you could make your mind up one way or the other before Christmas. . . ."

It is doubtful if much pioneering in the State of West Australia ever was done by ox cart, for oxen need water, a commodity that has always been in short supply over most of the state. The diesel semi-trailer takes its place, and about a week later the semi-trailer driven by Spinifex Joe ground to a standstill in a swirl of red dust before the homestead of Laragh Station.

Spinifex Joe looked like a half-caste. He was a small, lean man about fifty years of age, good with diesel engines, a good bush mechanic capable of making quite a tolerable repair by welding when the need arose. He had use for these qualities, because he was the postman.

Each week he started on Monday morning from the post office at Onslow on the coast of West Australia just inside the tropic and drove eastwards, loaded with two or three sacks of mail that had reached Onslow by air, an assortment of packing cases destined for the stations that he served, drums of fuel and kerosene, and all the aboriginals who cared to climb on board.

When he stopped at Laragh, Mrs. Regan was waiting for him on the veranda of the homestead: a tall, commanding woman about fifty years of age, born in Edinburgh and brought to West Australia as a child. With her was her twenty-year-old daughter, Molly, one of her eleven children, and David Cope.

David was English, twenty-two years old, born and bred upon a farm near Newbury. His family had emigrated to West Australia and had bought a farm near Perth. At the age of sixteen David had gone as a jackaroo upon a sheep station, to learn the business.

He had stayed there for four years and had remained enthusiastic about sheep, with the result that now, only two years later, he was manager and part-owner of Lucinda Station, white enthusiasts being something of a rarity in the far north of West Australia.

Lucinda was a property of about 320,000 acres that lay to the west of Laragh, a sizeable stretch of country somewhat hampered by a water supply that would have been deemed inadequate for a three hundred acre farm in England.

The mail truck did not come to Lucinda and that morning David had driven thirty miles in his jeep to collect his letters at Laragh, a cheerful, energetic young man in a torn khaki shirt and trousers.

He had been sitting with the women on the veranda drinking tea and waiting for the truck. As it ground to a standstill he got up and went into the sun to meet the driver. Mrs. Regan followed him.

"You brought my kerosene, Joe?" she inquired.

"Two kero," he said laconically. "Six diesel and four petrol. That right?"

"Aye," she replied, "that's right. Will ye have a cup of tea? Pat'll be down with the boys in a minute to unload."

He followed her with a mail sack, and sat down on the edge of the veranda while he sorted through the letters; she did not ask him to sit in a chair with them. Molly poured out a large cup of very strong tea with a great spoonful of sugar in it, and took it to him.

Beside the homestead stood the station store. Beside that was a smaller building that served as the station office and the school. The door opened now and a flood of children burst out into the sun, children of all colours from the deepest black to pure tanned white, all ages from four to twelve. There were about thirty of them; the two white ones came over to the homestead.

These were Mrs. Regan's youngest children, Maggie and Shamus. The station bookkeeper, who also served as the schoolmaster, followed them. He was a shambling, grey-haired, scholarly looking man, well into his sixties.

Spinifex Joe handed a bundle of letters and parcels to Mrs. Regan, who took them on her lap and began to sort them through.

She looked up as the schoolmaster approached. "Here's one for you, Judge," she called. "And here's your newspaper from England."

He approached, and took them from her. "Thank you indeed," he said. "My sister is a very regular correspondent, is she not?"

"Aye," said Mrs. Regan. "Never forgets to write."

A Land-Rover appeared from the direction of the station stockyard half a mile away. Mrs. Regan said to the postman: "Here's Pat and the boys, Joe. They'll get the drums off." To her daughter she said: "Get the bottle, Molly, and the cold water and the glasses."

The little truck drew up beside the semi-trailer and two young half-caste men got out. From the driver's seat a huge, powerful old man emerged. He was over seventy years of age, but he still boasted a shock of bright red hair. He was dressed in soiled trousers of jungle green and a khaki shirt. He had come from breaking horses with his sons down at the yard, and he carried a stockwhip. On his shoulder perched a kangaroo mouse.

David Cope got to his feet as the old man came to the veranda. "Morning, Mr. Regan," he said. He eyed the long-legged mouse. "What's that you've got there—a hopper?"

"What else would it be?" asked Mr. Regan. "The kindest hopper this side of the black stump." He paid no more attention to the young man but took the bunch of letters from his wife and shuffled them through. David Cope sat down again upon the edge of the veranda.

Pat Regan picked out a letter in a long official envelope and peered at it suspiciously. The mouse peered with him from his shoulder. There was an official imprint on the envelope. He would not admit that he now needed glasses, and he had never read well anyway.

"In the name of God," he exclaimed, "what would this one be?"

His wife took it from him and screwed up her eyes.

"It says, Bureau of Mineral Resources," she told him. She opened the letter and read it through in silence.

"It's from that man Bruce who was here before," she said. "He says he's coming here again about the first of the month and bringing with him six Americans belonging to the Topeka Exploration Company to make a seismic survey. He says that they'll be working on our land about fourteen miles west of the homestead."

"Did ye ever hear the like of that!" exclaimed the old man angrily.

"That's what he says," his wife remarked equably. "He says at the end that the survey will decide whether they drill a test well here or not."

The girl came back carrying a tray and set it down on the table. Her father said irritably: "Will ye write straight back and say that they're not wanted here? I'll have no part of them, no part at all."

"Go easy now, and have your shot of rum," his wife said quietly. She laid the letter down and reached out for the bottle and poured out half a tumbler of neat overproof rum into one glass, and half a tumbler of ice-cold water into another. "Take that, and then come on and sit down in the shade."

The old man lifted the mouse carefully down from his shoulder and set it down upon the ground at the end of the veranda; he gave it a gentle pat behind and it ran under the house. Then he came up on to the veranda and took the glass of rum his wife held out to him, shot it down in one swallow, and followed it with a chaser of water from the other glass. Then he sat down heavily beside his wife.

"Americans, is it? Americans on Laragh Station!" He spat scornfully on to the withered grass lawn of the homestead. "If there's money to be gathered any place in the wide world those boys are after it, deep down in the earth on other men's land, ten thousand weary miles from their own rightful place."

He flared up suddenly into a fury. "Go on and write the letter, Judge! I'll not have Americans on Laragh Station, not if the Holy Father were to write from Rome itself."

The old man that he called the Judge rubbed a hand across his nose. "I doubt if we have any right to refuse them, Mr. Regan," he said gently. "We hold this land upon a pastoral lease. There is a clause in the agreement that binds us to give reasonable access to any part of the land for the exploitation of the mineral resources."

"And would ye call it reasonable that they should bring Americans to Laragh? Will ye answer me that, now?"

The Judge poured himself a rum and shot it down, following it with a chaser of water. "Some Americans are very pleasant people," he observed. "But mundane, I am afraid. Very, very mundane." He sucked a drop of rum from his thin, straggling moustache.

David Cope said: "They'll be working not far from our fence, Pat. They'll probably be nearer my place than they are to you, in fact. I think it might be rather fun, having some Americans around."

"Fun, is it?" exclaimed Mr. Regan. "Would ye be after calling fun the way they carried on in Alice Springs all through the war?"

His daughter said: "Here's Uncle Tom coming."

Tom Regan appeared round the corner of the veranda. He was a very thin man, recently aroused from sleep; he had not shaved for several days. He now did little work upon the property, yet his was still the directing mind.

He shuffled down the veranda. Mrs. Regan poured him a rum and a glass of water. He took them from her without a word.

"A letter from Mr. Bruce, Tom," Mrs. Regan said. "He's coming back with some American engineers to do another survey."

"How many of them?"

"Seven." She paused. "We can't have that many in the house."

"It's all a part of it," said Tom dolefully.

His brother Pat said: "Isn't there the shearers' quarters empty for them to sleep in, with wire beds for their bedding and a stove for them to cook on?"

The girl said impulsively, "You can't put Americans in the shearers' quarters."

"In the name of God," asked Pat, "why not?"

"They live differently to that," his daughter said stubbornly. "They live in lovely sort of flats called penthouses on the top of skyscrapers, or in big white houses about a hundred feet high with columns in front. It wouldn't do to put them in the shearers' quarters."

"Did you ever hear the like of that!" exclaimed her father. "It's a queer thing, I'm thinking, that the shearers' quarters would be good

enough for an Australian shearer and not good enough for an American, with all the lechery and evil in the world in his black heart."

David Cope laughed. "I see we're going to have some fun and games round here in the next week or two," he said.

He picked up his letters, said goodbye to Mrs. Regan, and walked towards his jeep. Molly got up and walked out into the sun with him, to see him off.

She was red-headed, like her father, and she had something of the same square line to her chin. She was wearing linen slacks and a shirt.

"How are you off for water at Lucinda?" she asked David as they walked.

"Not too good," he said. "We've got a little left in the big dam—last about a month. The bores are running well, though." He had two bores that produced water from a depth of about seven hundred feet; a windmill over each pumped up this water to a raised storage pool from which it was piped to troughs. His property was chronically short of water. For this reason Lucinda Station could only carry about four thousand sheep on its three hundred and twenty thousand acres, and a dry summer would imperil even those.

"Are you going to put down any more bores?" she asked.

"I'm not sure that it's worth it."

"They cost an awful lot of money," she agreed. "What are they quoting now? Thirty bob a foot?"

"Two quid," he said. "It's not the money, though. We're making enough from the wool cheque to put down one a year, say. But I don't think there's any water there. We've got the two along the line of Blackman's Creek, and there's no sign of water anywhere else."

She nodded. She had lived all her life on Laragh but for periods at boarding school, and in her short memory four graziers had tried their luck on Lucinda Station, and had given it up after a year or two.

When David had come, this young English boy so full of energy and hope, the Regans had been sorry for him, the more so because he worked so hard on his depressing property. They respected him and showed him kindness, while they waited for the years of drought that would dry up his bores and finish him competely, and send him back into some city for a job, a ruined man.

"Any news of Charlie?" he asked.

"He's still in England."

"Is he coming back here?"

"I don't think so," she replied. "Not for a long time, anyway." Charlie was her half-brother, for he had been born to Mrs. Regan in the days when she was married to Uncle Tom. "He's setting up as a consultant now, in a place called Harley Street. That's something good, isn't it?"

"It's where all the big doctors live," he said. "He must be doing very well."

"He's awfully clever."

He glanced down at her. "You know, you're a pretty bright family. Is Bridget still in Canberra?"

She shook her head. "She's doing a course of Chinese, somewhere near Melbourne."

"I thought she was absolutely brilliant when she was here last year," he said. "I was scared stiff of opening my mouth."

He paused and then added: "You're a clever family."

They stopped by his jeep. "We aren't really," she said. "Ma says it's all the Judge's doing. I think he's a wonderful teacher. I got really interested in history before I left here to go to school. And Bridget was the same. She could speak French and German before she was ten."

David blinked. It seemed incredible on Laragh Station.

"Tell me," he asked, "why do you all call him the Judge? What's his real name?"

"I don't know his real name," she replied. "I suppose he doesn't want people to know it. He's called the Judge because he is one—or he was. He got the sack."

He grinned. "I didn't know a judge *could* get the sack."

"Well," she said, "there's one that did."

"Too bad! When did it happen?"

"Oh, ages ago; before I was born. Uncle Tom found him stinking drunk in a hotel at Geraldton and took him on as bookkeeper. He's been here ever since." She paused. "Ma says he was a schoolmaster when he was a young man. I think that's why she's put up with the Judge all these years—because he's a good schoolmaster. He's not much of a bookkeeper, really. Mike checks the books over when he comes up for his summer holiday each year, and he finds an awful lot of mistakes."

"Is Mike one of your brothers?"

"Well—sort of. He's Uncle Tom's son, when Ma was married to him. Mike and Charlie and Bridget—they're all Uncle Tom's. Mike's a chartered accountant in Perth."

He wrinkled his brows. "Well, who's Stanley?"

"Stanley and Phyllis," she explained. "they're Fosters. You see, Ma was a Mrs. Foster and she had two children. Then Foster got killed in a car smash and Ma hadn't any money, so she worked in a bar in the Unicorn Hotel in Perth. Uncle Tom went down to Perth for a holiday and met Ma in the bar and married her, and brought her and Stanley and Phyllis back to the Lunatic."

His head was swimming. "It all sounds a bit complicated," he said.

"It isn't really. It's just that there are rather a lot of us. Ma had eleven children."

"Quite a lot of kids to send to school."

She laughed. "The schools round Perth just live on us. . . ."

The Americans had hoped to arrive at Laragh Station on a Saturday afternoon. In fact, they took a wrong track which took them fifteen miles out of their way. They stayed that night as guests of the Rogersons at Mannahill, and found that they had come in for the big social event of the district, the weekly picture show.

Among the visitors Stanton Laird was quick to notice a remarkably pretty girl, red-haired and white-skinned, who had come in a jeep with a young man called David Cope from Lucinda Station.

Mr. Bruce knew her well. He called out down the veranda. "Hey—Stan! Come over here a minute. I want you to meet Miss Molly Regan, from Laragh."

Stanton held out his hand. "Why hallo, Miss Regan, I'm certainly glad to know you," he said. "I hoped we'd get on to your property today, but Don will have told you that we're running late."

"I know," she said. "What happened?"

"I guess we just naturally got lost," he said. "It's kind of easy to go off on the wrong trail in this country."

"But didn't you follow the tracks that the mail truck makes?"

"One wheel-rut's just like another wheel-rut to me, Miss Regan."

She laughed. "Molly's the name, Mr. Laird. We use Christian names in this country unless you're trying to be very formal."

"Fine," he said. "I'm Stanton."

She turned, for David was behind

COURTESY—5

When friends are at your hearthside met,
Sweet courtesy has done its most
If you have made each guest forget
That he himself is not the host.

James Aldrich

All out—but not all in! Stern tests of stamina call for Robinson's Barley Water. It contains glucose to restore spent energy, lemon for refreshment and barley for smooth, satisfying goodness. There you have it in a glassful—the best drink for the 'blues'—a winner from the word 'Go'.

3!- Lemon or Orange

ROBINSON'S gives you—

Lemon Barley and Glucose

for Refreshment and Energy

CVS.09

SHOE-LIFE STORIES *continued*

'I never seem to need new shoes'

Certainly these shoes don't look two years old. That's one up to you dear.
Yes, my tip about Phillips certainly paid off. Especially having them fitted when the shoes are new.
All our shoes last longer now - and stay much smarter-looking, too.
Take it from me— PHILLIPS double the life of your shoes

Phillips

'STICK-A-SOLES' AND HEELS

her. "David," she said, "this is Stanton Laird. They got lost between here and Malvern!"

He laughed. "I got lost all along the road when I came up here first."

Stanton turned to David. "You aren't Australian?"

The other shook his head. "I'm English. I've got Lucinda Station, next to Laragh."

The geologist nodded slowly, his mind running over the maps that he had studied. "That's to the west of Laragh," he said. "I guess we'll be operating pretty near your boundary."

"That's right," said David. "If I can give you any help I hope you'll come and tell me."

"That's mighty nice of you."

Mr. Rogerson turned the corner of the veranda and came to the little group.

"Drinks just outside the dining-room," he said cheerfully. "Mr. Laird, what can I get you? Gin, whisky, or rum?"

Stanton had travelled far, but Hazel still held him very close. "Thank you," he said a little awkwardly, "but I don't believe I'll take anything right now."

"Nothing at all? Everybody's drinking like so many fishes just around the corner."

It was getting a little awkward, and Stanton became aware that they were all looking at him curiously. "Maybe something soft," he said.

"Why—yes! What would you like? Lime juice, or lemon squash?"

"Lime juice—a long one."

It was Molly who asked what they all wanted to know. "Don't you drink, Stanton?" she asked kindly.

"Not alcohol," he said.

"I thought all Americans drank terrifically," she said. "I suppose I'm going by the movies."

He smiled at her. "I'd say the movies aren't a very safe guide."

The Rogersons were used to an influx of visitors for their movie show and enjoyed having them, but that night they had to have tea in relays; with the surveyors, they had over thirty people to feed in the dining-room. After the meal Clem Rogerson set up his projector and amplifiers while the visitors arranged chairs on the lawn in rows.

THE main feature was one that Stanton had seen first in New York four years previously, again in Hazel with his family before leaving for Arabia, and again at Abu Quaiyah. Seeing it for the fourth time it failed to hold his attention; he had leisure to study the audience and to reflect on his surroundings.

Before leaving Hazel he had considered that this assignment would be just such another one as Abu Quaiyah had been, a hot desert where they had lived in social isolation among an Arab population. He was already realizing that here it was not going to be like that at all.

The movies came to an end about ten o'clock, and the Rogersons dispensed more drinks, with tea for the women. Stanton avoided alcohol this time by electing for tea.

Molly Regan came up to him. "I'm going off now with David," she said. "We've got rather a long way to go. You'll be coming along to Laragh in the morning, I suppose?"

"I guess so," he replied. "Mr. Bruce, he's in charge. Does it make any difference being Sunday?"

She shook her head.

"I'd say we'd be along in the morning, then," he said.

"That's fine. I've just got to go and find Mrs. Rogerson to say goodbye, and then I'll be going off. See you tomorrow."

She smiled, and he smiled back at her. "'Bye now," he said. The girl went off to find her hostess to say goodbye. . . .

When Donald Bruce drove up to Laragh Station next morning with his party of Americans, Mrs. Regan was there to welcome them, with Molly and the two youngest children, Shamus and Maggie, aged twelve and ten respectively.

Tom and the Judge were lying on their beds somewhat unwell. At Laragh on Saturday night the men would get together in the store office after tea and commence the serious business of the week, which was drinking rum.

An excess of alcohol never kept Pat Regan in his bed; his massive frame carried the rum well. Disappointed in the ways of God to man, he turned for solace to the animal kingdom. He loved all animals, and he was very good with them. There was generally a little kangaroo hopping about Laragh homestead, a joey brought in by one of his stockmen.

The hopping mouse was the latest triumph of the man who could tame anything. He had found it as a youngster only about two inches long out in the bush at the foot of the windmill that pumped one of his bores, and had brought it back in the toolbox of a truck, the tools thrown out and the box lined with gum tree leaves.

Pat Regan read no books or newspapers, nor did the radio appeal to him. His simple interests lay in taming animals and drinking rum. For weeks he had fed the mouse small dead beetles, cheese, and young shoots of the eucalypt, had played with it and made a fuss of it. It had ridden on his shoulder throughout much of each day.

That morning he had retired on to the back veranda of the store with the mouse, for he was developing a wonder with which to surprise and amuse his wife. He was training the mouse to come to him and hop up on his shoulder whenever he called, "Hop!"

As the trucks approached Laragh, Donald Bruce, driving with Stan Laird, said: "All these properties are a bit different, you know. You mustn't expect this one to be like Mannahill."

Stan smiled. "I know it. These people are Irish, aren't they?"

"That's right. Take them the right way, and you'll find they can't do enough for you."

They drove on in silence for a minute. "You won't mind if I explain to them that you don't drink?"

"I'd appreciate it if you would. I see it's kind of awkward here, but I just don't like the stuff."

"Oh, that's all right," said Mr. Bruce without much confidence. "I'll fix that up for you. They're very hospitable, you know, and that's about the only hospitality they understand. They're immensely kind."

"Kind?"

The other nodded. "The kindest people this side of the black stump."

"The black stump?"

"It's what they say round here. It just means—anywhere."

They drove to the homestead about midday. The single-storey building stood drenched in blazing sunshine under a cloudless sky; its white-painted iron roof hurt the eyes. The men got out of the trucks and Mrs. Regan came to meet them, with Molly and the children. The girl said: "Ma, this is Stan Laird, from America."

Stanton said: "I'm certainly glad to know you, Mrs. Regan."

"You picked a hot time of day to come over," she said. She led the way to the veranda. "Molly, get the tray and the glasses." She turned again to Stanton. "You've been working up in the north here for some time?"

"Most of us are new to this country, Mrs. Regan," he said. "I only landed in Australia a week ago."

"Well," she said dryly, "welcome to the Lunatic."

He blinked. "The Lunatic?"

Donald Bruce said, "I should have told you that one, Stan. It's what they call this end of the Hamersley Range, the Lunatic Range."

He smiled. "Why do they call it that? Because only lunatics live here?"

"Aye," said Mrs. Regan. "They're all right when they come."

The girl came down the veranda with the tray and set it down upon the table. Stanton was relieved to see that there was a bottle of lemon squash by the rum bottle.

Molly said: "Stan doesn't drink, Ma."

"Do ye tell me that! Would ye have a lemon squash, then, Mr. Laird?"

Pat Regan appeared around the corner of the veranda, the mouse perched upon his shoulder. His wife said: "Pat, this is Mr. Laird with his party."

"God save you," said the grazier. He did not seem particularly enthusiastic in his welcome.

The survey party said goodbye to the Regans after lunch and set out for their location to make camp before nightfall, having refused an offer of the shearers' quarters. "I guess we'd better camp out where the work is," Stanton said. "Fourteen miles is a little far to go and come for meals."

"Be sure now to let us know if we can do anything for you," Mrs. Regan said. "The laundry, now—what will you be doing about the wash?"

"Do it ourselves," said Stanton. "We always do that."

"Ye'll be carting water all the time. Why don't you run it in here every couple o' days, and let the gins do it along with ours?"

The offer was too good to refuse. "It certainly would help us if we could do that," said the American. "It's mighty kind of you."

"It's no trouble. Just bring it in and dump it in the wash house, and they'll do it."

MOLLY said, "Can Ma and I come out one afternoon and see what's going on, Stan?"

"Why, certainly," he said. "Come any time you can. I don't suppose we'll have much to offer you, except ice-cream."

"Ice-cream? Where on earth would you get that from?"

He was a little surprised. "We make it. We've got a freezer in the truck."

She laughed. "What flavours?"

Stanton called to the camp cook, "Hey, Ted! What flavours of ice-cream do we have?"

"Strawberry, maple, and vanilla, boss."

"I'll have a maple," said the girl.

He smiled at her. "I'll have it ready for you." He climbed up into the driver's seat of the truck. "'Bye now."

He drove off from the station buildings with Donald Bruce riding in the seat beside him; the Australian directed him on to a faint wheel track that scarred the red earth. The other two vehicles followed in his dust. After half an hour a gallows-like erection appeared on the horizon.

"That's right!" said Donald Bruce in slight relief. "The cemetery."

Two vertical posts supported a cross-member which carried a painted board above a gate between the posts, and on this gate was painted,

SHIRE OF UANTARINGA
CEMETERY

A single strand of barbed wire supported on tumbledown posts cut from the bush stretched away into the distance on each side of the gate. Inside the enclosure a single low mound, untended, was marked by a vertical post of sawn timber.

"I guess there's not much business," the geologist said.

A mile past the cemetery they came to the boundary fence between Laragh and Lucinda. It consisted of three strands of wire supported on bush timber. A gate crossed the track.

"That's the way on to Lucinda," said Mr. Bruce. "We turn right here, along the fence."

Stanton swung the truck round and began to follow the line of the fence.

"He seems a nice sort of a young fellow, the one who lives at Lucinda," he said. "I met him last night at Mannahill Station."

"That's the one," said Mr. Bruce. "He's got his eye on Molly."

To be continued next week

Abridged from the novel, "Beyond The Black Stump," by Nevil Shute, to be published on April 30 by Heinemann, at 15s.

"Have you anything on how to get out of doing it?"

COURTESY—6

Courtesy is a duty public servants owe to the humblest member of the public.

Lord Lytton

HOLIDAY in SWITZERLAND for two, plus £750 CASH!

FOLLOW Mr. H. V. Lambshire and his wife (100 Valentine Court, Forest Hill) to the thrills and wonders of a £100 holiday amongst the Alps. Lucerne? Interlaken? Lugano? As this week's £750 First Prize-winner, *you* choose when and where for the most glorious week or fortnight of your life!

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The Uno Orchestra	Crowded
Din Of Battle	Pedestrian's Nightmare
To Ease The Pressure	Knows A Thing Or Two
They Came, They Saw And	Sonny's Gang
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£50: W. Hitchen, 48 East Bawtry Road, Rotherham: BRINGING UP A FAMILY—NO LONGER—PIT CAGE.

£25: L. Bennett, 125 Heath Lane, Dartford: A SLIGHT MISUNDERSTANDING—THEN *Last* GIGANTIC MISTAKE?

OTHER AWARDS: £10: J. Jose, 1 Alderson Street, Bishop Auckland: BRINGING UP A FAMILY—HEARTACHE, BACKACHE—"ACHE" *Without*! £9: R. Rimmer, 70 Part Street, Southport: THE WORLD AWAITS—COMMON-SENSE—HAS EVERYTHING *Else*! £8: J. W. Dawson, 35 Lennon Drive, Bradford: BRINGING UP A FAMILY—ENDING ADVENTURING? UNENDING ADVENTURE! £7: J. Sharples, 18 Rigby Road, Blackpool: JOB FOR SONNY—METALLURGY—OR SCRAP METAL? £6: Mrs. H. Rayner, 7 Birchdale Road, Appleton, Warrington: TAKES SOME CLIMBING—"STAIRWAY" IN *Tumbledown* SCHOOL. £5: H. Cracknell, 102 Lyndhurst Drive, Hornchurch, Essex: TAKES SOME CARVING—CHARACTER—*Blunt* WORDS HELPFUL. £5: E. Laughlin, 11 Oakdale Drive, Wrose, Shipley, Yorks: HOWL OF THE WIND—REMINDING TRAWLERMAN *Greenhouse* UNSAFE!

For ten winners of £2 10s., see "*Bullets*" *Bulletin*. Further 200 prizes have also been posted.

RULES 1. First Prize for best *Bullet* received. Others in order of merit; the test is of cleverness, aptness and originality.

2. Editor undertakes that all *Bullets* received shall be accorded careful consideration by competent Adjudicators.

3. As entry-fee enclose P.O. as indicated on coupon. Fee submitted will be taken to cover *Bullets* in coupon order—any sent in excess will be disqualified. Plain-paper entries are allowed. Make P.O. payable to JOHN BULL, cross /& Co./, write name and address on back. Coupons must not be mutilated.

4. Entries accepted by post only and on condition that result of this Contest (in JOHN BULL dated April 28), also Editor's decision in any matter of dispute, are accepted as final and legally binding. Odhams' employees (and families) ineligible.

(See "Daily Herald" on Saturday, April 14, for early news of No. 2,032 result.)

POST ENTRY

"Bullets" 2,032, "John Bull," Long Acre, London, W.C.2 (Comp.).

HUGE JERSEY HOLIDAY OFFER NEXT WEEK!

It'll be dry in an hour, Ma'am!

SAYS MASTER DECORATOR, *Harry White*

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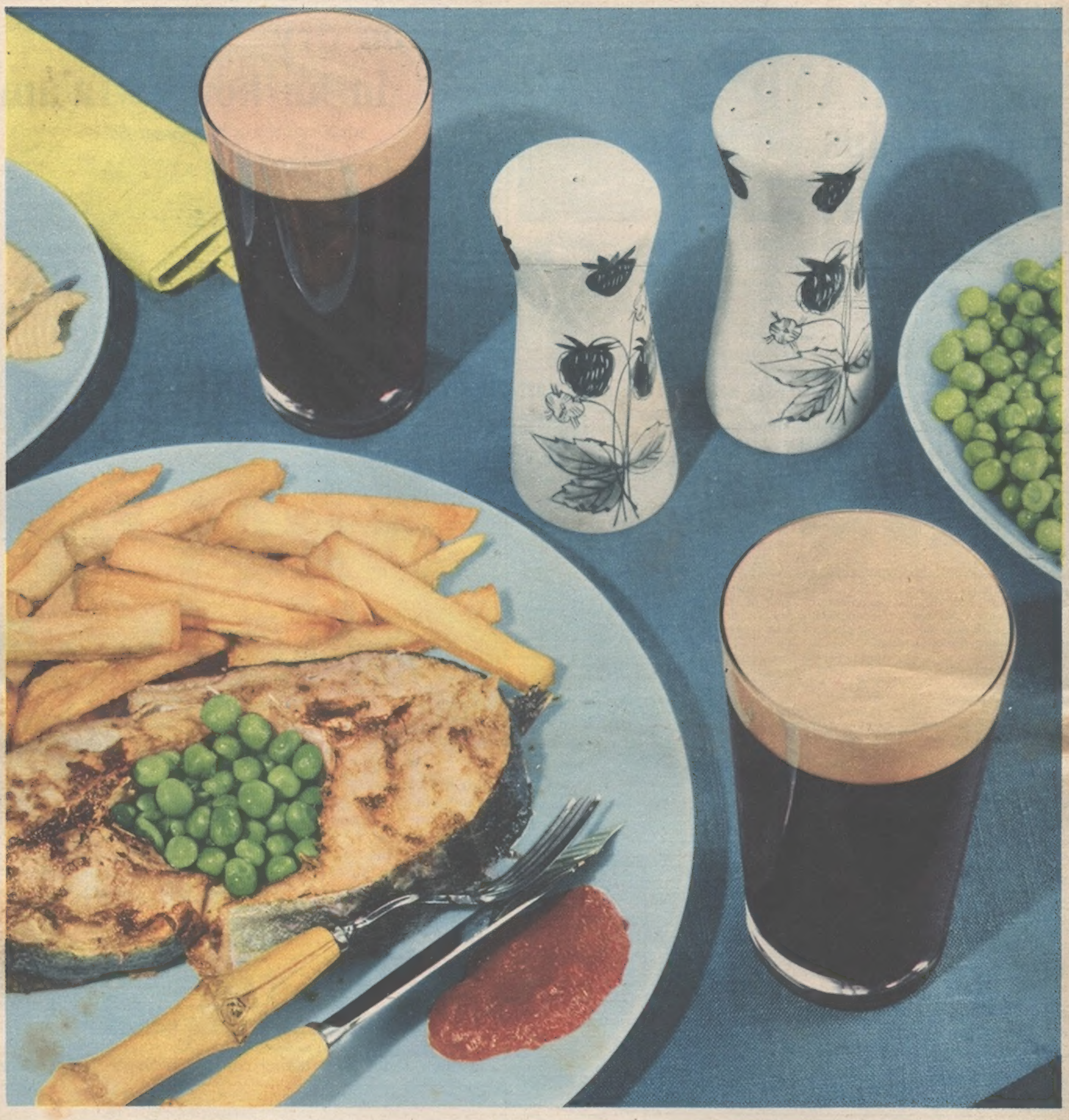

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